THE FACTS OF LIFE

H.W. HANEMANN

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THE FACTS OF LIFE

A Book of Brighter Biography

The Facts of Life

A Book of BRIGHTER BIOGRAPHY
Executed in the Manner of Some of Our Best or Best-Known WRITERS, SCRIVENERS & SCRIBES *by*

H. W. HANEMANN

& Illustrated by that MERRY WAG
HERB ROTH

Published by
FARRAR & RINEHART, INC.
Not a Stone's Throw from The Library at New York
MCMXXX

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For my dear little
great-grandniece
HELEN HANEMANN

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I

PINK PERFECTION

Nell Gwynn Tells the Love Things in Her Heart to Kathleen Norris

PINK PERFECTION

CHAPTERS ONE TO EIGHTEEN, INCLUSIVE

"Right through the line, now, Marquis."

"Block that kick, Duke!"

"Look out for a forward pass, Countess. Never mind the fancy business; tackle low."

Bathed in warmth, St. James's Park lay in the lush glory of a late afternoon sun. Big, black glorious figs fell with a soft "plop" from the fig tree, in the prune orchard prunes fell from the prune trees with a soft "zwish," grapes fell from the grape arbor with a soft "clank." At the foot of the hill, the blue Thames purred lazily over Limehouse Reach. Nasturtium, lobelia, phlox, delphinium, petunia and hibiscus scented the air.

Nell Gwynn looked upon the gay croquet scene with eyes whose customary humor was veiled by a sudden tenderness. Tiny she was, her quick, fluttering gestures calling to mind a wild ibis. Her bright, piquant face was capped with a crown of curly, fuscous hair and from long practice her small

hands were sturdy, capable. "Witty, pretty Nell," Pepys had called her—Pepys who had some sort of a job in the Navy Yard but who loved nothing better than to be seen at Roxv's or Lindy's or at gala Dutch Treat luncheons.

For that matter, she thought, what about herself? Born in the coal yard off Drury Lane, rising through a childhood in the backwaters of London's slums to orange girl in the King's theater, actress in that same theater and now—by the grace of Charles II, privileged inmate of St. James's Park. In the triumphant progress there had been another Charles . . . two other Charleses. . . . Nell shuddered. She must not think of that, she must force herself not to think of it. "Don't think of it, Nell," she whispered to herself. But old, half-buried memories persisted in making themselves heard. . . .

She would sit apart and wait for Charles, she thought. It was fun, waiting. First there would be a stir at the end of the long path fringed with gentian, hepatica, calendula and mallow, then there would be the excited yapping of small dogs, and then . . . Charles! She closed her eyes.

"Cuckoo!" Some one tapped her lightly on the nose with a croquet mallet. "A penny for your thoughts."

"Cuckoo. A penny for your thoughts"

Startled, Nell laughed vivaciously. "Er—my thoughts. Always clowning, aren't you, Charles?"

"Come feed the ducks, Nell."

Slowly they walked down the path to the duck pond and sat by the edge. From the pocket of his beflowered waistcoat, Charles extracted a biscuit, crushed it and fed it to the greedy fowl. "Quahk," they said, "quahk! quahk!" Nell permitted herself a slight giggle at their Oxford accent.

"Happy?"

"Oh!" It was a round, colored, elfin bubble of sound.

"Do you care for me?"

"Oh, yes, Charles. Do you care for me?"

"As I have never cared for any one." The hand that ruled the English nation closed firmly over the smaller one.

"Charles," her merry, childlike face clouded suddenly with an unwonted seriousness. "Charles, you spoke about my thoughts. When two people are, well, fond of each other, shouldn't they know everything about each other?"

"They do. That is, dear, they know enough about each other to love each other for the goodness and sweetness of their natures."

"Yes, but if something had happened to one of

them which wasn't exactly in accordance with her goodness and sweetness, wouldn't it be finer and greater and better to tell?"

"It might hurt him terribly, dear."

"But it would hurt her more not to tell—to know that he did not know and not knowing, that he trusted and cared for her and all the time she was not quite what he thought she was. Oh, Charles, wouldn't it be finer and greater to tell, even if it hurt him, hurt him terribly?"

Charles idly plucked a daisy from the lawn.

"If he really cared for her, he would not want her hurt, yet if it hurt him to hear what hurt her to withhold it might be finer and better for her to nurse her hurt in silence."

"But that would make her hate herself, make her feel she was living a lie."

"But, dear, if by telling him she hurt him, it would hurt her. It would hurt her to hurt him. By doing so she would not heal her hurt and there would be two hurts instead of one. No, there would be three—her old hurt, his new hurt and her new hurt for his hurt."

He laid the daisy gently in her lap. "Let this flower advise you."

"Oh, no. Love is neither evasion nor conceal-

ment. Love is based on trust and trust is founded on truth. The opposite angles of an isosceles triangle are equal and two parallel lines, however prolonged, will never meet in infinity. Love is greater than the individual. Hurt though we both be, you must know, Charles."

"Know what, you child-woman?"

"You are not Charles the First."

"Odds fish, gosling, is that news? I am Charles the Second."

"No, Charles." Her voice was low and halting. "Not even Charles the Second."

The regal eyes flashed. "Is this treason?"

Nell was on her feet, the brilliance of her eyes matching the king's. "Never! Unforethoughtfulness, perhaps, but never treason."

"Ah," said Charles, calming himself. "Yes, tell me, then." He slipped his arm about her waist. Tightly she clasped his swarthy hand.

"It was the summer of 1667. Charles Sackville . . . oh, I cared for him terribly . . ."

"You mean Lord Brockhurst, later to be known as the sixth earl of Dorset?"

"Yes, Brockhurst. I had been acting all winter and we took a house at Epsom. He said the salt air would be good for me. It was silly, unconven-

tional, I know. But we were like that in the theater. We thought it was smart."

"You had no chaperon—you and Brockhurst?"

Curls cascaded over the sprigged waistcoat as Nell buried her head in Charles's shoulder. "N-no!" At last she had told.

Too long silence in which her measured heartbeats thudded with the slow taps of doom. Nell forced herself to raise her head and look into her monarch's face. Eyes and lips smiled down upon her tenderly.

"My dear," said Charles, softly, "I have known all that for ever so long. I may have seen you there once or twice, myself. You might have spared yourself the pain."

"And you don't mind?" Nell was breathless with astonishment.

"Mind? The very thought of another man's—another man's"—Charles coughed delicately—"is enough to boil my royal blood. But how can that affect what I feel for you? What has what has happened in the past to do with—us?"

"Us?" whispered Nell. "Knowing what I am, you still love me?"

"Ah," said the king. A ripe coconut fell from a near-by coconut shy into the pond with a soft

"splash." "Either love accounts for everything, transcends everything or it is not—love."

"Fool that I was, to be afraid. Not to know—how great you are. My king!"

"Enough, enough, my dear. We must not think upon this ever." Charles rose to his feet flicking the biscuit crumbs from his lap with a lace handkerchief. "Come, let us have music."

Nell was herself again, flying down the path to the bowling alley ahead of the king, running like a little girl. "Ladies and gentlemen," she cried gayly, "our king would have music. This way to the king's fiddlers! This way to our Chas band!"

Witty, pretty Nell, indeed. Tears there were in her eyes now, but they were tears of happiness.

CHAPTERS NINETEEN TO TWENTY-SEVEN, CONJOINTLY

In her boudoir fashioned after the fluted, iridescent shell of a deep-sea scallop, Nell lay lightly upon a rose brocade chaise longue, polishing her nails. At the foot of the chaise sat Merket, her gentlewoman, a copy of the *Daily Reflector* open upon her knees.

"Shall I read to you, mistress?" Fondly Merket

sought to serve her in the one thing in which Nell Gwynn was not overly proficient.

"Do, Merket. And don't call me 'mistress.' [It was rarely that her ready wit forsook her.] Read me 'On Piccadilly' by that Winchell fellow."

" 'On Piccadilly,' " began Merket dutifully, with a slight Irish accent, "be Walther Winchell —'This Burg of Ours';

" 'My Lord Montagu is making them walk home from a new post-chaise . . . It's a boy over at Whitehall . . . Samuel (Diary) Pepys and Mrs. P. have phfftt . . . Prince Rupert has ongay utsnay about Mrs. Hughes . . . Who is it with Lady Castlemaine this week? . . . or next week? . . . I was wrong, it's two boys—and a girl over at the Palace . . . Ann and Becky Marshall were cock-eyed in the Cheshire Cheese, yesteeve . . . the Sir Rob't Howards are anticipating a Rt. Honnabul . . .

" 'Who paid Mrs. Boutell's check at the Elephant and Castle, Satdee nite? . . . the latest score at the Palace is Cleveland, 6—Athletics, 4 . . . Nell Gwynn seen buying a drink at the Bond Street Nedick's . . . how does it feel to be on the other side of the counter, Nell? . . . Sam Pepys and Mrs. Knip borrowed a telephone book and drove to

My Lord Montagu is making them walk home from a new post-chaise

Little Tooting, Sunnay nite . . . the Duke of Albermarle has a new Phrench Periwig . . . says he can make 85 in it, easy, or five better than the Duke of York . . . our be-9 monarch, King Charles II and Louise de Kérouaille, that phasinating Phrench phemale are looking for Dark Corners—' "

"Stop!" Nell sprang from the chaise longue and tore the paper from Merket's hands. "Where is it? That . . . ! Where . . . !"

"What, madam?"

"That—about the king! And don't call me 'madam.' " Trembling, the gentlewoman showed her, and Nell, with difficulty, spelled out the words letter by letter. It was there, unmistakably. "Go! Go!" she cried, fairly pushing the terrified companion out of the room.

She sank down upon the chaise longue and tried to collect herself. Charles—and Louise de Kérouaille! That foreign, Popish—no! And Charles, *her* Charles! Nell thought of her manikin Charles, the weentsie one, lying in his bassinet in the royal nursery, kicking cleverly with his feet, crowing "mm-mm-mm," laughing and more than possibly drooling a little. For hours in silent wonder she had watched him as he lay staring with delicious

vacancy at the ceiling or wrinkling his cherubic forehead preparatory to a succession of sturdy howls over a sudden adorable colic. Her heart melted at the thought of his one garment fastened with a gold safety pin stamped with the Lion and the Unicorn.

Nell flung on a furred dressing gown and, the *Daily Reflector* crushed in one tiny hand, mounted the palace stairs to Louise de Kérouaille's apartments on the third floor, front. Unceremoniously she burst through the door.

"Oh, Nell, just in time." The tall, slim, slightly weary and aristocratic Louise looked up from the table at which she had been working with quill and book. "Tell me a six-letter word meaning 'very little.' "

"Zrunft?" said Nell.

"No, it has to start with an 'm.' "

"Mrunft, then."

"But that doesn't mean anything."

"It means very little," admitted Nell, "but that's what you asked for. I'm not very good at those cross-word things," she confessed.

"I forgot." A tinge of patronage crept into Louise's voice. "You're not very literary, are you, dear? In fact, it is said that you are practically illiterate."

"As who isn't?" countered Nell. "I don't think there was a time in the whole history of England when there were so many—" She clapped a small hand over her mouth. Artless, direct, plain-speaking, she came to the point at once. "Never mind that—what about this?" She indicated Winchell's paragraph with a shaking forefinger.

"Oh, that!" Louise de Kérouaille permitted herself a tinkle of well-bred laughter. "That dear Walter Winchell! He is naughty boy!" Sometimes she affected a calculated awkwardness with the English tongue. It seemed now a deliberate taunt.

"Is it true?"

"Why not?" answered Louise, coolly.

"But—but he is *my* Charles."

"And because he is your Charles he cannot be my Charles? After all, must he content himself solely with the crude if robust charms of an ex-orange dispenser? At least I have had a background comparable with his . . ."

"But I love him!"

"If, as you say, you love him, if you really love him, you would be eager to further his interests."

"Yes, of course. That is—I suppose so."

"Well," concluded Louise de Kérouaille airily, "his interests are centered in me."

"I could kill you, I think," said Nell, passionately.

"Oh, no, you couldn't. For one thing, it would not be the least bit like you. For another, you would gain nothing by it. You are popular. You are popular because you are kind and thoughtful of the rabble. The rabble love you because they feel you are one of them. Stay one of them, Nell. It may yet be your salvation. A king's favorite—well enough while it lasts, but when it is over, too often there is much of life still to live. Come, my dear, let us not quarrel."

Louise de Kérouaille had spoken almost as one inspired. Bitterly Nell felt the truth of it. She had come too far—from the coal yard to the Court—not to know. The same native wit that had carried her so far could not disown the wisdom of the French woman. And yet . . .

"I shall go to the king. At once!"

"A minute," answered de Kérouaille, "while I write him a little note. You can take it to him . . ."

But Nell had gone.

* * *

"But, Nell, nothing has changed in the way I feel about you"

"My dear, my dear."

"Oh, Charles, it can't be true! It isn't true!"

Charles threw three or four spaniels out of a large arm chair, sat down and drew her gently to his knees.

"And if it is? Has that anything to do with —us?"

"Us. Oh, Charles—our love, our boy-thing, our romps together, our fun-games and our future. And I had felt so secure, so much at peace, so happy—"

"But, Nell, nothing has changed in the way I feel about you. What I feel about Louise has nothing to do with what I feel about you. Your Charles is still your Charles whatever else betide."

"Betie that outside." The response came muffled from the royal shoulder. Could her accursed wit never forsake her?

"And at the risk of repeating myself, I say again what I said to you at the duck pond, 'Either love accounts for everything, transcends everything and remains what it is or it is not—love.' "

The duck pond! A flood of memories rushed over Nell, engulfing her, warming her, lifting her on its crest. She raised a shining, radiant face to the king's, for now she knew her heart.

"I love you, Charles," she whispered simply.

It was defeat, but it was glorious defeat. Nell had found herself, and finding herself, she had found herself beyond herself . . . above.

CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR OR FORTY-SIX

Whitehall Garden, redolent of the massed fragrance of late spring, was murmurous with the voices of the members of the immediate court. Under a huge lilac bush transplanted from Kew, Lady Chesterfield sat knitting a farthingale. On the grass at her feet sprawled the Duke of York, an expression of mild satisfaction upon his face.

Two hundred or so feet to the left, the little Dukes of Grafton, Southampton and Northumberland played cricket with their mother, the Duchess of Cleveland. In her pram which had been wheeled into the comfortable shadow of an oak, little Mary Tudor, Moll Davis's daughter sat crowing. Molly herself, seeing Nell Gwynn approaching, rose and greeted her affectionately. They had both been of the theater, those two.

"Sit down under the oak with me, Nell," invited Molly. Nell arranged herself with a little sigh of comfort and well-being.

"The children are all splendid, aren't they?" she said.

"Lady Castlemaine thinks little Anne has jaundice."

"Oh, nonsense. Anne gets her swarthy complexion from her father. Mary Tudor looks lovely, Moll."

"My dear—eighteen months old and she takes twenty-month gertrudes. The king is so proud of her. And how is Charles, junior?"

"Look—" Nell indicated the middle distance where two sturdy youngsters were chasing a terrified pack of spaniels with a golf stick. "He grows more like Charles every day. No, dear, you mustn't hit the little Duke of Monmouth with that approach cleek."

"I hear Charles is making him Baron Hedington."

"*And* Earl of Burford, my dear. And I am to be Countess of Greenwich. It's a scream!"

Moll Davis smiled wistfully. "Are you happy, Nell?"

"Oh, indeed. At first I felt a little crowded, but I grew used to that."

"Oh, yes. Loving Charles, one can understand. He is such a family man."

"And we are all just one large family, one large loving family, loving and beloved."

"Dear Charles!"

"Dear Charles!"

Arm in arm they sauntered over to a gayly-colored group testing the strange, net-shaped implements for the afternoon's lacrosse. They walked carefully to avoid numerous very small children who, with their stiffly starched Nanas, dotted the landscape.

"Babies all over the place," murmured Moll dreamily. "Isn't it wonderful?"

"Oh, rather," replied Nell, "—and poor Charles hasn't so much as a bicycle!"

II

GREAT CATHERINE'S GREAT IDEA

A Loose Lady-Friend of Viña Delmar's

GREAT CATHERINE'S GREAT IDEA

It was a hell of a note. Yes, sir, that's what it was, a hell of a note. You couldn't please any of them. Mamma Anhalt-Zerbst had nearly busted herself in half to get her married to Pete Romanov. If she hadn't kissed the back of old Mrs. Romanov's neck, it was because she hadn't thought of it. It was the chance of a lifetime, a golden opportunity. Couldn't a girl, for God's sake, use what little brains she was born with?

So Catherine (christened Sophie Auguste Friedrike Anhalt-Zerbst) had married Karl Peter Ulrich Romanov because his old lady was the Big Shot on Petersburg Heights. Karl Peter Ulrich had a slack jaw and said "yeah." He would have said "yeah" to the minister only one of the bridesmaids had kicked him in the pants in time. It was an expensive wedding and it had made Catherine sick. Funny, there was always something the matter with her now. Headache, stomach-ache, a pain in the side, depression. Not that it meant anything. The

real matter with Catherine was that there was really nothing the matter with her.

Masha Shukov was late. You could tell things to Masha, Catherine reflected. She was a good egg. Good to you but not for you, Jake Skorodov had said. He was a great kidder. Well, Catherine was married to Pete Romanov and that was that. No use getting Russian about it. He was certainly no ball of fire. All he cared about was to shoot pool. Crazy for shooting pool. He never thought about anything else, if he ever thought. Catherine guessed Pete wasn't all there. She should always have guessed as accurately as that. She would have made a sucker out of Wall Street.

When Masha arrived Catherine perked up a bit. She perked up a bit of coffee for the two of them and opened a tin of caviar.

"Well, Feeky?" said Masha. It was good to hear her pet name.

"Hebrews; thirteen, eight," answered Catherine. "Look it up for yourself."

"Pete?"

"Pete."

"I don't see how you stand it." Masha was frank; that's why Catherine liked her.

"What you don't know, Masha, would get you

"'Gee,' he says, 'what a kick the ice-man will get outa that!' And he goes to sleep."

into the movies." Catherine laughed grimly. "Listen, can you keep your trap shut?"

"My grandmother was a Klamm."

"Well, it's our wedding night." A faint flush suffused the fine olive of Catherine's cheek. " 'Well,' he says, 'here we are—hey, Katie?'

" 'Here we are, Big Boy,' I says.

" 'And here we'll be to-morrow morning?'

" 'It looks like it, don't it?' I says.

" 'Gee,' he says, 'what a kick the ice man will get outa that!' And he goes to sleep."

"The lousy bum!" breathed Masha Shukov.

Catherine laughed scornfully.

When Masha had gone and the percolator had been put away, the telephone rang. That would be old Mrs. Romanov—Mamma Elisabeth. Catherine set her teeth. She thought of pretending she wasn't there. She might answer in a disguised voice—she was clever at that sort of thing. "No, ma'am, Miz Rummynoff done gone out wawkin' wiv de woof-hound." Or, "Das lady ban out. Ay tank yu hang up now, sure and be gorra."

What was the use? Mamma Elisabeth would only call up again. Catherine took the receiver off the hook. She put it up to her ear.

"Hallo—and how is my *galubchick* to-day?"

Even the telephone could not dissipate the proprietary manner, the incisiveness, the imperiousness.

"Just the same, thank you, Mamma Elisabeth."

"Have you taken your Bestushev's Drops?" Catherine groaned inwardly. Those damn drops. There were four cases of them piled right now in the kitchen. Not that they were so bad. You could always use them when the gin ran out.

"Yes, Mamma."

"And no different, hey?"

"No, Mamma."

"Sha! Sha! Babies are for young people. They keep the home together. And you've been married over a year."

"Yes, Mamma."

"You love each other."

"Yes, Mamma."

"Well, then, what the hell?" Mrs. Romanov could be unnecessarily coarse upon occasion. Evidently this was an occasion. "For my Pete I couldn't say ever since he dropped that pool-ball on his head as a little one. But you are a smart girl."

"Yes, Mamma."

"Maybe you are too damn' smart!" Mrs. Romanov hung up.

Catherine put the receiver back on the hook and

Little lacy caps hung in the window, and dresses with horses and elephants and bunnies on them

poured herself a hooker of Bestushev's Drops. This baby talk of Mamma Elisabeth would drive her nuts. When was she going to have a baby? Why wasn't she going to have a baby? Didn't she know she ought to have a baby? It was her duty as a Romanov-by-marriage to have a baby. Every day she called up and went through the same song and dance. Her own mother was no better. First she got married to please them. Now she was to have a baby to please them. An heir, they called it. They could take the heir and they knew what they could do with it. They could all go jump in the lake.

Not that she wouldn't like to have a baby. She could see the baby store on Nevsky Boulevard right now, the one with the bright red sign, reading

YE KIDDIELAND SHOPPE
Sol Blumov, Prop.

Little lacy caps hung in the window, and dresses with horses and elephants and bunnies on them. Cute. And booties. Tiny little booties. You could hold two or three dozen of them in the palm of your hand. Red and yellow kiddie-cars and ridiculous little midget-sized furniture. It was terrifying, but

it made something deep down inside of you feel like a hot fudge marshmallow sundae. Oh, she would be glad enough to have a baby. You had a baby and then you wrote a book. There were worse things than having a baby. For instance, there was Pete.

There was Pete, right enough. He dropped his whoopee hat on the malachite table and stumbled into the living room.

"Hi," said Pete.

" 'Fascinated by my brilliant conversation, they gathered around me while I told them all where they got off.' " Catherine was mildly ironic.

"You going cuckoo?"

" 'To-morrow, at half-past four. Bring the kiddies.' " Kiddies. A sharp stab of pain went through Catherine's consciousness. "Your mother called up," she said abruptly.

"What did she want?"

"She wanted a baby."

"Say, what the hell?" Pete's chin clicked against the third button of his low-cut vest.

"Listen, Bozo!" Catherine's eyes flashed like a traffic signal. "I got to have a baby."

"Why don't you write to Santa Claus?"

"Maybe I will. But I thought I ought to consult you about it first."

"Consult your Aunt Fanny."

"I don't have to. For a year, now, it's been the consensus of opinion in your family and mine that I ought to have a baby."

"It's Ma again, is it?" said Pete. "She's getting old. They get funny that way when they get old."

"So am I getting old."

"Well, you don't look it. What do you want to do—go around looking like Mrs. Choglukov?" Mrs. Choglukov lived upstairs and had children on a strict biological schedule.

"I don't care. Anything is better than your old lady's yapping. It's obscene."

"It's what?"

"Let it go." Catherine had only a vague idea of what it meant herself. "Anyhow, Pete Romanov, you listen to me. Somebody has got to tell you the facts of life." Her cheeks burning, Catherine succinctly set down what, for a year, had been uppermost in the minds of Mamma Anhalt-Zerbst, Mamma Elisabeth, old Mrs. Choglukov and Petersburg Heights generally. It seemed that everybody had acquired the idea but Pete.

When she had finished, the hope of the Ro-

manovs grabbed up his hat in haste from the malachite table. "Say," he said, "it's your lower jaw, ain't it?"

"What's my lower jaw?"

"It's your lower jaw that moves when you talk. Well, so long. I got an important pool match down at the Elite and the boys are waiting. Don't stay up late." He was gone.

Catherine nursed a dull rage in what, for the Heights, amounted to a virgin breast. No doubt Pete had understood what she had said. And all he'd done was to rush off to the Elite Pool and Billiard Parlor. When he got back, she would be in bed, asleep. The hell she would be asleep!

What would she do now? She might take the wolf-hound, Rasputin-tin-tin, for a walk. She had walked that damn mutt around so much he was worn down to a Sealyham. She opened a can of soup and put it on the stove. She was having soup when she ought to be having a baby. What was the matter with Pete, anyway? It was natural for married couples to have babies. It was expected of them. "The expectant bride," thought Catherine to herself, and she thought of what she had told Masha Shukov. A blinding revelation flashed over her. Little incidents, half-forgotten, came

crowding into her mind to strengthen a conviction she knew instinctively to be true. Pete Romanov, her husband, was a—

Well, no use getting Russian about it.

When Pete came back at nine o'clock, you could have knocked her over with an uncorked bottle of Mary Garden.

"Hey," said Pete. "We got company. This is Serge Saltikov. He's a buddy of mine. The pool room got raided. So we come up here."

Serge Saltikov was young and good-looking. He had curly hair and strong, white teeth. Under his arm he held a balalaika. "So this is Pete's Little Woman," he said, laughing. He laughed easily, constantly.

"Who did you think it was," retorted Catherine, "one of Louisa M. Alcott's?" Catherine could crack back with the best of them.

Serge started to strum the "St. Peter and St. Paul Blues" on the balalaika. Catherine went out for a bottle of Bestushev's Drops. It looked as if it was going to be an interesting evening.

Serge did an imitation of Chaliapin. Then he did Eddie Cantor, Al Jolson and Rudy Vallée. They were terrible, but to Catherine they sounded sweeter than the big headliners at the Imperial

Opera House. He was a comic, all right, but she knew his type. A Heights sheik. She didn't know that she cared for the way he looked at her. Serge knew. When you live in the Heights, you get to know soon enough.

"Some Mamma." The Drops were getting in their dirty work. "And Pete puts in all his spare time at the Elite." Pete looked foolish. It was a practically effortless accomplishment.

"Are you interested in Art, Mr. Saltikov?" Catherine felt it was time to put the conversation on an intellectual plane. Serge answered by raising his eyebrows and putting his necktie in his pocket. Catherine laughed. How was anybody to ritz a natural-born fool?

When Pete went out into the kitchen for another bottle, Serge leaned over and spoke in a confidential tone.

"Say, baby," he said, "how's for seeing you some time?"

"Your gall isn't divided into three parts, is it?" Catherine responded coolly.

This was the first indication of the sound historical instinct which was to play so great a part in her later career.

When Serge had gone, Catherine found his face

"Some mamma." The Drops were getting in their dirty work

floating dimly around her in the dark. His curly hair was cute and his teeth certainly wouldn't pay Dr. Goldman's office rent. "What the hell!" thought Catherine, crossly, and got up for some bicarbonate of soda.

The next day, Mamma Elisabeth was not so importunate over the telephone. Instead she was inclined to be gossipy.

"So the pool room was raided?" said Mamma Elisabeth. "Good! Maybe that bum boy of mine sticks around home for a while."

"The gang are all going down to the Star on Novgorod Prospekt instead," answered Catherine. "I don't see that it makes any difference."

"Loafers!" Mamma Elisabeth dismissed the gilded youth of her domain with Olympic disapprobation. "What else is new?"

"Peter brought Serge Saltikov to the house last night." It was said before Catherine had time to wonder why she had thought of it.

"Hey? Serge Saltikov? A fine boy. A loafer, but a fine boy. A good family, I know the parents. The father owns the Serge Suit Shoppe—Cleaninge and Pressinge. You like him?"

"We got along all right." Catherine was noncommittal. Mrs. Romanov chuckled fatly.

"A fine boy. A smart boy. Popular with girls. Peter should be more like him."

"Yes, Mamma." What was the old witch driving at?

"And you're a smart girl."

"Yes, Mamma."

"A smart boy and a smart girl." Again the fat chuckle. "Well, Feeky, good-by. I got to take the chops off the dumb-waiter." The phone clicked.

What was the great idea? Talking about Serge and her like that, saying they were both smart, laughing. It wasn't her usual line, thought Catherine. Her usual line was— God! She couldn't mean it! Catherine sat down hard in a chair. His own mother! True, she was only his aunt, but she had adopted him when he was a small baby. And now she was suggesting, hinting—it wasn't possible. Catherine stayed in her chair and went into conference with her feelings. When the conference broke up, she was rather surprised at the result. That was the way things were when you happened to be christened Sophie Auguste Friedrike Anhalt-Zerbst. No use getting Russian about it.

The bell rang. Arranging her negligee more circumspectly about her, Catherine went to the

The gesture was not so much Russian as Cosmic

door. She opened it upon Serge Saltikov. Grinning from ear to ear, he stood resplendent in a new gray suit. It was dove gray. Catherine wouldn't know about that.

"Hello, Honey," said Serge. "How's this for a surprise?"

"That's right," she said, "shout, you sap. Do you think you are in the Arabian desert?"

* * *

Biologically interesting as always, Mrs. Choglukov, 6-D Tsarskoe Selo Arms, held converse across the court with Mrs. Vladislav, whose number was 6-E, same address.

"I positively heard voices," said Mrs. Choglukov, "laughing and so on, late as it was. Hers I could be sure of. The other I couldn't tell."

"His, no doubt," said Mrs. Vladislav. Being thick-witted, she leaned toward kindliness.

"Maybe," said Mrs. Choglukov, "only I happen to know he was down at the Star taking over my Max for six dollars and fifty cents in a pool game."

One flight below, Catherine, luxuriously recumbent upon the divan, set down her Bestushev's Drops highball. Languidly, she brought the thumb of her right hand to her nose and twiddled the fingers.

She twiddled her fingers toward the window which opened upon Mrs. C's and Mrs. V's medium of communication.

"When a Romanov," murmured Sophie Auguste Friedrike Anhalt-Zerbst, "do as the Romanovs do."

And at that, the gesture was not so much Russian as cosmic.

III

THE FIEND IN THE VATICAN

Inspector Edgar Wallace, C.I.D., Dockets the Borgias

THE FIEND IN THE VATICAN

I. BEWARE OF THE BULL

The pleasant dining room of Castello Salami found Lord Cadwallader Orsini putting the finishing touches on a platter of broiled kidneys.

"Well, my dear," he remarked, looking up from the morning newspaper whence he was judiciously extracting the morning news, "three stranglings last night, four poisonings, a stabbing or two and a man dragged out of the river."

"And what suspicion of the source of all that naughtiness?" Lady Aubrey Orsini was young, blonde and lovely, with the agreeable cast of countenance that comes only from a fine mind blended with a sunny disposition.

As if in answer to her question, the plaintive protest of a pedigreed cow in a neighboring field drifted through the stained-glass window. Lady Aubrey Orsini paled.

Her husband laughed and pinched his young wife's cheek. "Come, come, my love," he said re-

assuringly, "I wot what you are thinking, what-what, but I promise you that I still have some influence in these parts. No one is going to take a 'crack' at an Orsini, if you will pardon a term generally used by those 'on the crook.' "

"I am 'jerry' to your 'lingo,' " replied Aubrey. "You mean 'slip him the works.' "

"Not that my modest holdings, your twenty-foot rope of pearls, your diamond plaque, your rubies, your emeralds and your sapphires are without temptation. To say nothing of your own sweet self," he added whimsically.

"Oh, Cad, you are a tease. You know that all my jewels are safe in the iron strong box in the little secret room of the western terrace." She turned to the butler, hovering respectfully at her elbow. "You may bring us more coffee, my man."

"More coffee, eh?" said Orsini, rubbing his hands. "That's the ticket." At the mention of his favorite tipple, all sinister thoughts vanished from his naturally cheerful mind like a spot under a touch of brown Windsor. It would have been better had Orsini noticed the slight narrowing of the servant's eyes as he left the spacious chamber.

The spies of the Borgias were everywhere.

II. ALEXANDER'S BAND

Pope Alexander VI had cajoled, bribed and threatened his way into the papacy. Born of a Spanish family, he showed little love for the Eternal City, reserving his ambitions, inordinate to rapacity, for himself and his questionable brood. Shrewd, unscrupulous and pertinacious, he found it convenient to assume an affable and agreeable air, boasting that he preferred to do unpleasant things as pleasantly as possible. As he turned to the familiar at his side, his voice was almost kindly.

"What is it, Fra Diavolo?" he asked.

"A servant of the Orsini, craving audience."

"You're sure he isn't a 'busy'?"

"You mean a 'dick'?"

"I mean a 'flattie.'"

"Oh, a 'gum-shoe.'"

"A 'peeler,' fellow, a 'sleuth-hound.'"

"Oh, a 'robert.' No, Pope, he isn't a 'bull.'"

Alexander glanced at the taurine crest blazoned on the high back of his chair, and laughed. "There are no bulls but the Borgias. Show him up."

When the butler of Cadwallader Orsini stood before the Pope, Alexander contemplated him with amused eyes.

"If it isn't my old friend Beaky Di Marco, the spotter," said he. "And who sprung your ugly mug out of stir?" One of Alexander's little foibles was to affect the "flash patter" of the "underworld."

"Get yourself a load of this, Chief." Unconsciously Beaky made use of the ethical dative. "It's hot."

Alexander listened. "Superb, my excellent Beaky," remarked the Pope when the treacherous pseudo-servant had concluded. "You are, of course, expecting a split?"

Di Marco's ferret-like eyes glistened and he nodded eagerly.

"You shall get it. Ho, axe-man! Any particular way you prefer your split?" he purred. "Vertically, horizontally, on the bias . . . ?"

A dawning horror grew in Beaky's eyes. He blurted inarticulate words of protest, falling on his knees in supplication.

"Take him away!" snarled Alexander VI savagely.

III. ALL ONE HAPPY FAMILY

"You ingenious fiend!" The low vibrant voice was lush with admiration.

By certain standards, Lucretia Borgia, natural daughter of Rodrigo Borgia, better known as Pope Alexander VI, would have been adjudged beautiful. The close-fitting costume of medieval Italy revealed a magnificent figure slightly over medium height. The dark lustrous hair was caught in a shimmering net of pearls and the voluptuous mouth smiled readily—too readily, as many men might have told. But dead men tell no tales.

"How are you fixed for arsenic, cyanide of potassium, deadly night-shade and Paris green, my dear?" asked Alexander.

Lucretia examined her reticule. "Enough for an army," she replied lightly. "May I give you some, my beloved parent?"

Alexander laughed. "You have my sense of humor," he remarked dotingly. "No, thank you. Save it. But where is Cesare?"

"Here I am."

Cesare Borgia, coarsely handsome, with the traces of his violent and dissolute life stamped indelibly upon his face, entered the room. He stood sulky and sullen, in his customary manner.

"Where have you been?" The Pope's voice was sharp.

"Down in the city, doing a little strangling." As

if in memory, Cesare's predatory talons clenched and unclenched spasmodically.

"I wish you would have your strangling done for you, like a gentleman," said Alexander severely, "instead of doing it yourself."

"But, Papa," admonished Lucretia, "darling brother is such a big brute, he needs the exercise."

"You shut your jaw!" snarled Cesare inelegantly.

"Tuck your shirt in, Ducky," replied the good-natured Lucretia, "Papa has a job for us."

". . . You're sure you both understand perfectly?" asked Alexander, as he concluded the details of his infamous plot.

"Sure, sure," growled Cesare. "It's too complicated." Cesare objected to everything as a matter of principle. "Well, I must be gone. I have to slice a man's tongue with a red hot dagger and cut off both his hands. And I have to see another man about a dog—a mad dog with a preference for biting little children." He chuckled ghoulishly.

On the way out, Cesare struck down the servant who held open the door and stepped on his face, grinding an iron-shod heel in the unfortunate man's eye. It brought no word of protest from Alexander or Lucretia, though each breathed an inward sigh of relief when Cesare had gone. Neither

"You shut your jaw," snarled Cesare inelegantly.
"Tuck your shirt in, Ducky."

parent nor daughter had felt quite the same toward him since the unpleasantly sudden death of Giovanni Borgia, Alexander's oldest son, and the equally unpleasant death of the Duke of Bisciglie, Lucretia's third husband, less than three years later. Cesare knew more about these two untoward demises than he cared to admit.

But to Alexander an atmosphere of gloom was more venial than one of Donna Lucretia's notoriously lethal nosegays. "Now that's settled, my dear," said he complacently, "shall we have Pierluigi and Ascania up from the kitchen and watch them perform the dance—that delightfully impudicious 'Turkey Trot,' 'Bunny Hug,' and 'Camel Walk?'"

"I can conceive of nothing more pleasurable, Papa," replied Lucretia.

It is distressing to note that the Pope and his daughter frequently amused themselves in this fashion. Under Alexander VI, the Vatican was no place for a minister's son.

IV. LUCRETIA SETS THEM UP

Cadwallader Orsini leaned against a wrought-iron lamp post in the Corso Tutti-frutti whilst read-

ing for the third or fifth time a note which he held in his hand:

DEAR SIGNOR ORSINI:

Please meet me at the Taverno Porco at the Hour of None. I have a wonderful trade-last for you.

Very truly yours,
LUCRETIA BORGIA
(Mrs. Duchessa Bisciglie)

P.S. Do not show this note to any one.

L. B.

Putting the note carefully back into his wallet, Orsini turned into the small street back of the small street back of the small street back of Corso Tutti-frutti and entered the shady night dancing club called the Taverno Porco.

"You are expected, Signor." The proprietor, Luigi Verdi, was a greasy and unprepossessing wop. "Upstairs, if you please. It is the first door on the right."

Orsini mounted and knocked on the closed door.

"*Entrate*," cried a musical voice. Orsini, who was familiar with the Italian tongue, took it to mean "Come in." Lucretia, attired in a dark velvet cloak, sat at a small table in the center of the room.

"You are prompt, Cad—Cadwallader," she

Orsini turned into the small street back of the Corso Tuttifrutti and entered the shady night dancing club called Taverno Porco

began in a tone which she fondly fancied to be beguiling.

"Yes, yes." Orsini spoke with some difficulty as he held his hand over his left cheek. "You will pardon my swollen face, Donna Lucretia," he said, "but I have a very bad tooth. You wished to see me about a"—he removed the note from his wallet and consulted it—"a trade-last, I believe? It is very kind of you."

Lucretia laughed. "Not at all. First let us drink, Cadwallader. You don't mind if I call you Cadwallader?"

"That is my name." Orsini spoke somewhat stiffly, partly on account of his swollen cheek and partly through reticence. Though Italy in the Sixteenth Century might be described as wanton and licentious, Lord Cadwallader Orsini was ever a man of honor.

Lucretia picked up a bottle of wine from the floor, deftly extracted the cork and filled two goblets. "Now close your eyes and count ten" she directed, jestingly.

Orsini closed his eyes and counted. As he counted, Lucretia emptied the contents of a small phial into his goblet.

"Bottoms up!" cried Lucretia, roguishly.

"Bottoms up!" agreed Orsini, slightly raising his eyebrows in distaste at the vulgar expression. They clinked glasses and drank. Lucretia came over to Orsini's side and put her arm about him.

"Does your tooth feel better, Boy?" she cooed.

He attempted to fend off her familiarity, but power failed him. His eyes closed, his head sunk lower and lower. He slumped limply upon the table.

Lucretia laughed softly. Going to a corner of the room, she stamped lightly upon the floor. A secret panel slid back, disclosing a hole. With unexpected strength, she dragged the unresisting body of Orsini over to the trap and slid it into the depths.

As his head disappeared over the edge, she patted it kindly. "Poor Cad," she murmured, "he took it like a lamb. Poor dear."

Despite the many evil stories which have been told about her, Lucretia Borgia was not much different from the other great ladies of her time. At her worst, she was but a tool in the hands of her malicious brother. and her scheming, cupidinous father.

V. THE MASKED ICEMAN

Jenny Bernucci entered the boudoir of her mistress, the Lady Aubrey Orsini, and curtsied. "The

"Poor Cad," she murmured, "he took it like a lamb"

iceman, madonna, would like to speak with you, if you please."

"Why, Jenny," replied Aubrey in surprise, "cannot cook speak to him?"

"Cook spoke to him," replied the prim Jenny, "and he threw her into the moat."

"Dear, dear." Aubrey bit her lower lip in annoyance. "I can't have cook thrown about like that." She descended the broad stairs to the kitchen. In the center stood a stalwart, masked figure. "Are you the iceman who wished to speak to me?" asked Aubrey.

"Do I look like—" The man started to roar in protest and suddenly changed his tune. "Yes, madonna," he replied, quite humbly.

"Why are you masked?"

"Romance, madonna. An iceman is as traditionally romantic a figure as a tenor. You've heard of a masked tenor? Well 'get a load' of a masked iceman." Was Aubrey mistaken, or was he leering at her behind the disguise?

"I 'got a load' of you yesterday," said Aubrey, evenly. "A hundred and fifty pounds. See, it is marked upon the card. I don't think we'll be needing anything, thank you."

"It won't hurt to look." The iceman strode to the door of the ice box and flung it open.

"Keep away from that ice box." Aubrey was surprised at the calmness of her voice. "You are not an iceman. You are Cesare Borgia."

"You know me?" snarled Cesare. He ripped the flimsy subterfuge from his foul features and cast it upon the floor.

"I recognized your clumsy expedient the moment I entered the room. I know you and I don't like you, Cesare Borgia."

"You'll like me better when you know me better. And you are going to know me better—my poppet."

"I'm not your poppet, indeed!" exclaimed Lady Aubrey in disdain.

"My mommet, then—my red hot mommet." He showed his pitted teeth in sickening amorousness and circled the table.

"Don't—don't—" Cesare had come near enough to Aubrey for her to read the terrible things in his eyes. She turned her head and made for the open door of the ice box. He followed her slowly, like some huge and filthy cat stalking its prey.

"Keep away, I say!" Now she was in the ice box. Before she could close the door he had entered and was crowding her to the wall.

"Aubrey, Aubrey, where are you? I'll find you, you little hell cat"

"My darling, my little one . . . Aubrey . . . I have always loved you . . . wanted you . . ." The ice flowed in streams from the awful ardor of Cesare's vile passions. Aubrey cowered against the wall of the ice box, covering her face with her hand to escape his profane advances. . . .

Click! She pressed a concealed button and a secret panel opened in the back of the ice box. Down the subterranean passage with which the ice box was connected by the secret panel Aubrey fled like a hare. In hot pursuit came Cesare.

"Aubrey! Aubrey! Where are you? I'll find you, you little hell cat! Curse you!" Frustrated, Cesare had become a savage animal. Sufficient menace before, he was now a seething, foaming madman, purple with murderous intent.

To the left, to the right, to the left again, and now to the right. Aubrey sped down the dark passages, her breath coming in straining sobs.

"Aubrey! Aubrey! You hell cat! You vixen!" The voice grew fainter and fainter. Aubrey stopped running and leaned against the damp wall of the tunnel to catch her labored breath and still the pounding of her terrified heart. Safe!

Ever true to his evil predisposition, Cesare Borgia had chosen the wrong turn.

VI. ONE OLD CATACOMB

In a dingy passageway of the Roman Catacombs, the body of Cadwallader Orsini lay amongst the rubbish. Though it had not moved since flung from the trap in the floor of the Taverno Porco by Lucretia Borgia, acute perception might have distinguished a faint and quiet breathing. Cadwallader Orsini was still alive.

A masked and cloaked figure clutching a shining dagger in its hand now crept stealthily toward the body of Orsini. Nearer and nearer he approached. He raised the weapon to strike.

"Not so fast, my man!" The voice was cool, derisive. The surprised bravo found his wrist caught in a grip of steel. Making a movement too fast for the eye to follow, particularly in the Stygian darkness, Orsini plunged his own dagger into the hired assassin. The fellow collapsed with a groan.

"Not what you expected, eh?" Cadwallader Orsini spoke rapidly to the rapidly expiring thug. "Thinking I was safely drugged to insensibility, Donna Lucretia sent you to dispatch me. Had your mistress been a little more clever, my friend, she would have known that I have the soundest teeth in Rome. The swelling of my cheek was from no

dental ailment but from a sponge which I had concealed in my mouth to absorb the poisoned drink so painstakingly prepared for me. Fight subtlety with guile, my fellow."

"Right, guv'nor, it's a fair cop." The man's eyes glazed. He was dead.

Hastily Orsini lighted his pocket torch and consulted a blue-print of the Catacombs. The Borgias had erred again in forgetting that a competent blueprint of the famous Catacombs was available from any petrol station in the city. The secret passage to Castello Salami would lie to the right. Cautiously Orsini advanced, picking his way over the bones and skulls of forgotten dead which lay about in profusion. Around the third turn, he heard the unmistakable sound of breathing. "Who's there?" he called sharply.

"Cadwallader!"

"Aubrey!" She was in his arms, sobbing her story.

"Quick, Aubrey, we have no moment to lose!" Leading her by the hand, Cadwallader made still another turning and flashed his torch upon the wall. "I thought so." Large letters painted upon the wall read—

☛ THIS WAY TO CASTELLO SALAMI

"The Catacombs connect with the residences of all the important families of Rome," he explained as, with his arm about his fair wife, they walked rapidly back to the opening in the wall of the ice box by which Aubrey had escaped. It was a matter of a second to step into the box and thence into their own kitchen. The secret panel closed after them with a click.

"Oh, Cadwallader," said Aubrey as they stood once more in the security of their stronghold, "if you had not come in time. . . ."

"My dear," replied Orsini, "I realized something 'phony' was up as soon as I received"—again he had recourse to his wallet—"this and this. . . ."

"This" was Lucretia's hastily scribbled note. The other "this" was a proclamation:

I, with my retinue, will set forth at the Hour of Five through the streets for Bologna. Lords and ladies of such castles upon the line of march will acknowledge my passage by appearing upon the balconies of said castles and waving the ceremonial *calzonetti* as I go by. Failure so to do will constitute a serious breach of etiquette for which I decree all castles, fiefs, desmesnes and estates of such defaulters forfeit unto me.

ALEXANDER VI, Pope.

"It is obvious, is it not," commented Orsini, "that under these circumstances, Lucretia wished to—er—detain me?"

"And Cesare wished to—er—distract me," added Aubrey. "I see it all. How fortunate that I cleaned the ice box last week and discovered the secret panel. Hark!"

Trumpets sounded in the distance.

"The retinue of Alexander!" exclaimed Orsini. "Hurry, my dear." Hand in hand, like two happy children, they sped up the stairs of the old castle.

Two minutes later, as Alexander VI passed by the Castello Salami in all his pomp and glory, he found Cadwallader and Aubrey, lord and lady thereof, upon the balcony, cheerfully waving the laciest and most ceremonial of *calzonetti* in proper greeting. As he returned their salute his face was livid with ill-concealed surprise, disappointment and fury.

Cadwallader Orsini watched the glittering procession disappearing into the dust toward Bologna and carefully removed the top from a small ornate casket which he had been concealing beneath his cloak.

"What have you there, my dear?" asked Aubrey, with pardonable curiosity.

"Highly malarial mosquitoes, my love," replied Orsini, and launched the tiny insects into the void. "With this following wind, they will soon overtake Alexander, and, his blood being up, make short shrift of him."

"How delightfully ingenious, my dear boy," murmured Aubrey. "Inoculating him with their poison, the pleasant little insects with afflict him with a fever."

"They will infect him with a malignant fever from which he will undoubtedly die. And with Alexander dead, I doubt that we shall have any further serious trouble from the Borgia gang."

"How awfully jolly," said Aubrey, dimpling.

"Living in Italy during the Renaissance," replied Cadwallader, "is not without its excitements."

"Indeed," agreed Aubrey. "Nor its diversions, nor its dangers, not to say violences. Quite."

"Yet when one has been properly schooled therein, it is likewise not without its certain small satisfactions."

Fondly he bent his head and pressed a kiss upon the smiling, upturned lips of his wife.

THE END

To the Reader

If you have had a clean laugh from "The Fiend in the Vatican," you are no doubt all of a perspiration for a whack at the Inspector's next biographical horror. Here follows an early chapter of

THE MAN WITH THE HUMPED BACK

Or, The Days of Louis XI

"Fashion me this cage, Master Smith, of iron bars the thickness of a man's two thumbs. It shall be that large that one might scarce turn about with comfort and of that height that one would need bow a proud head to stand upright."

"It shall so be done, Sire," replied the prelate who was upon bended knees before his liege. "Shall I not stud the bars with sharpened spikes facing inwards? 'Tis a pretty sight—a cage bristling with needle-pointed nails that prick and goad and torment—sly skewers whose prim-mouthed kisses bait to fury e'en more than those of an ill-featured wife."

"Splendid! Splendid!" agreed the king. "*Ven-*

tre-de-Saint-Gris, my man, but you are a heady fellow. Do so, by all means!"

"And what strange, wondrous beast would my king therein imprison?"

"Strange, wondrous beast, quotha?" Louis XI, King of France by the Grace of God, chuckled malevolently, his vulture's face creased in a satanic smile. "Not strange, not wonderful. My lord Cardinal Balue, 'tis for yourself."

IV

ELIZABETH AND NOSSEX

A Radclyffe Hallegation

ELIZABETH AND NOSSEX

I

Elizabeth Tudor was born, September 7, 1533, a howling, red-haired, lean-hipped little tadpole of a baby. Her father, bluff Sir Harry Tudor, would have much preferred a boy. He was like that, was King Henry VIII, forever starting something which he came to regret after he could do nothing about it. Then he must act as badly as possible, swearing and stamping up and down and ordering peoples' heads chopped off with horrible grimaces. England resounded with huzzahs and the firing of cannon in celebration, but the feeling through the realm was that the long-expected heir had turned out to be a royal bob-tailed flush.

II

Elizabeth grew more red-haired, lean-hipped and broad-shouldered. Dr. Francis Paddlington-Winch, the court physician, put her into Ferris

waists and set a brace upon her teeth. Elizabeth was pleased with the brace. Men wore braces, thought Elizabeth, though of a different kind and attached not so much to their teeth, as to their trousers. Still, wherever worn, braces were a distinct article of masculine apparel. But courtiers lounging about the palace would remark fatuously, "La, Miss Betsy, you're getting to be such a big girl one would hardly know you," to which Elizabeth would reply, crossly, "I'm not a girl, I'm a boy," often pointing her statement with a word gleaned from Sir Harry's lighter moments.

All of which amused or irritated her father according to his mood. Either he would give her a resounding thwack at right angles to her lean hips and remark, oddsbud, that she was not only a boy, but the grandest man he knew, or he scowled and demanded that she immediately don garments suitable to a young lady of her rank. And royal blood or no royal blood, another such word from her baby lips would be deleted with a generous mouthful of Pears' soap and water.

When this occurred, Elizabeth, bravely fighting back the scalding tears, would take herself to Macpherson, her thoroughbred Shetland hunter. Macpherson the keen, the swift, the proud, the fiery,

would understand. He was not an educated horse—it was considered effeminate for horses to be educated in those days—but at least he had common horse sense. Sitting on an upturned tub, feeding carrots to Macpherson, Elizabeth poured out her woes to the patient animal, whose steady crop-cropping of the carrots provided a soothing antiphonal effect. Macpherson really loved her, for however nature had been otherwise deficient, she had given Elizabeth a pair of magnificent hands. And, reflected Macpherson munching away, with those hands to take him over a five-foot jump, girl or boy, it was no skin off his nose.

III

It was all very well to play one was a boy, but the ladies-in-waiting were at it again. Elizabeth knew now she was a girl. Her ears burned from the frank conversation of the young ladies and she found herself devoid of any quickening sense of sympathy. If it was all the same to them, *she'd* take a small beer. They were girls, Elizabeth thought, but they were rather horrid. She knew it wasn't all the same to them. Why was she like this —a gawky, masculine sort of creature with a long,

lean jaw, indifferent to the appearance of a dashing gallant, unstirred by the throaty tenor bleatings of a favorite minstrel? Would she ever . . ?

Elizabeth fiercely made a decision that she would never love anybody but Macpherson.

IV

The heart of Francis Paddlington-Winch was wrung for the hapless wight he had brought into the world. She would ask so little of it, and that little, too much.

"Poodle," said Elizabeth, bringing her keen blue eyes on a level with the doctor's own, "Poodle, what is the matter with me?" He heard her pet name for him with an additional twinge.

The maturing of the brilliant mind which was to be hers had caused Elizabeth, at eighteen, to summon the family physician.

"Matter? Not a thing, Miss Elizabeth. You have an exceptional intellect and your body . . ."

"I know. My body is supple, sinewy, narrow-hipped and broad-shouldered. I also have red hair. I am the mistress, or I intend to be, of six languages besides my own, a student of Greek, a superb calligraphist and an excellent musician. I am an expert

horsewoman and fencer. I dance, after the Florentine fashion in a way which, they tell me, astonishes beholders. My conversation is full, not only of humor, but of elegance and wit. What is the matter with me? Come clean, Poodle."

Under that direct, unflinching gaze, the old physician's glance fell. Though knowing Latin would avail him little, he muttered something about *lapsus naturæ*.

"In what respect?"

"Princess"—the old man was abject in misery—"you can Never Become a Mother."

"Oh," replied Elizabeth reflectively, "that's it, is it? That isn't so bad. I wasn't thinking of becoming one. Macpherson can't ever become a mother, either." Her level glance returned to the suffering Poodle. "Is that all?"

Despite himself, the words were wrenched from the old man. "Princess," he stammered, "there is grave doubt that you can ever be even a Pal. You are, as it were, *sui generis*."

There it was. As if she were in some remote high place, away and above, Elizabeth felt cold, detached, light-headed. Her mind went back to her childhood, playing she was a boy. This, then, was the answer. She wasn't a boy and she wasn't ex-

actly, in a manner of speaking, a girl. Somehow she found her voice.

"Well," she said, "what I won't know, won't hurt me. And at least I shall be spared bother and annoyance out of all proportion to the importance of the cause which produces it." She felt her speech stiff and slightly ridiculous. "Thank you, Poodle, you may go."

Grateful for that little, the old doctor fled. He could not tell her what he knew and what Elizabeth was to find out for herself.

They were brave empty words. In the world, things must be as they are to be, for the world will not have them otherwise.

BOOK 2

V

Red-haired, broad-shouldered, lean-hipped, Elizabeth, Queen of England, had found out what Poodle had spared telling her. In the first shock of her realization, she had taken herself to Macpherson, and he, somehow, had imparted the knowledge. The world must never know, Macpherson had told her, for the world would never under-

The gallant old horse was getting along but could still do his ten leagues to the bucket

stand. Like it or not, Macpherson said, Elizabeth was to make an outer show of the manners and customs of the day. For such departures as were unavoidable, the world would find its own reasons.

How right Macpherson was. Was she not called the Virgin Queen by the world and did not all England explain her condition by the exaltation of her rank? Elizabeth did not encourage discussion of the situation. As far as she was concerned, it was a closed topic. However delicately or tactfully her ministers broached the subject of her spinsterhood, Elizabeth would resist through an incredible series of delays, ambiguities, perfidies and tergiversations. Where, asked England, could be found a mate worthy of the divine Gloriana? Where, indeed, Elizabeth answered grimly and the budding hopes of France or Spain were blighted in another long, literary document.

For respite there were long hours in the saddle with the indefatigable Macpherson. The gallant old horse was getting along, but he could still do his ten leagues to the bucket. Moods came upon Elizabeth when she must be up and away from it all. Then it was into the saddle with a handful of lords and ladies and the countryside for leagues

about would be scoured. Restlessly, Elizabeth would descend upon this castle and that for the night, never spending the same night in the same place, never sleeping in the same room twice. It was senseless, thought Elizabeth, but it was adding untold wealth to the store of English tradition. Centuries later, over the length and breadth of England, they would be showing the rooms in which she had slept, the chapels in which she had muttered her prayers. What would they know of her praying or of her sleeping? What would they know of the ceaseless torment scourging her endlessly, driving her on, on, until the relentless activity of her mind must yield to the weariness of her lean-hipped, broad-shouldered body.

Dissimulation—it had become Elizabeth's life. She must dissemble even to herself, must pretend to things that did not exist and which in their very non-existence cried out to her harrowingly in the still watches of the night. What was it she had once said—"at least I shall be spared bother—" Good God! Every minor liaison of her court lashed her to a fury, the empty fury of frustration. The reported dalliances of Essex sent her to bed for weeks, Raleigh's brash overtures to Elizabeth Throgmorton were well-nigh unendurable. Yet

she must pretend—pretend. Not that the galliards at her court were unamusing, kept in hand. Leicester, Hatton, De Vere of the tilt-yard, young Blount who blushed so easily, Raleigh, Essex, young Robert Cecil—they were all able pieces in a complicated game, a game, to be sure, that forever outlived its zest.

In vague relief, Elizabeth sought the affairs of state, only to tinge them with the indecision of dissimulation. Should she send an army against Cadiz? Should she attack Calais? Was Essex to have the customs from the sweet wines, and what was her feeling, politically, toward her cousin Mary? Seemingly she changed from one side of a question to another, weighing, balancing, saying no when she was expected to say yes, saying nothing when an immediate response was vital. By waiting until a situation became unequivocal, matters more often than not adjusted themselves to best advantage and Elizabeth won renown for her statesmanship. But back of it all was the sense of frustration which she had come to feel overweighed her whole life.

Now it was Burghley with another state matter. "What would it please Her Majesty to do about—"

"Do? Do nothing."

"But it is of serious moment. Your Majesty must do something, and at once."

Elizabeth flung him from her with a gesture of impatience. Blind, stupid, insensate, conventional fool! "Do something. Do something . . ."

Dear God, *she couldn't!*

VI

The court was celebrating Twelfth Night, though as yet they were not very drunk. Soon enough Raleigh, flushed with the wine he had consumed, would set forth on a long, rambling discourse of his prowess, telling of the wonders of the New World. Ever a boaster, a posturer and an adventurer was Raleigh, a hard-bitten man at arms. That was it, he was a man. In her mind, Elizabeth recoiled from the thought.

It was better to have Essex beside her on the long, low bench. Essex—whom she called "Nossex" in jesting reference to the relation between them—was more subtle with his manhood. Virile beauty he had, but it was subordinated to a fine, flexible, adaptable mentality. With Essex, Elizabeth could relax, forget. Theirs was a meeting of the minds, a realm of fancy where ideas could be tossed back and forth

as if they were bright, gaudy balls. Essex was a comfort, spoiled therefore, inclined to imperiousness and to take advantage of his sovereign's indulgence.

He looked anxiously into her lean-jawed face where the faint lines of care were traceable. "You grow tired, Gloriana," he said simply.

"I am always tired, these days, Nossex."

"You do too much."

Elizabeth's eyes narrowed. Was this guile? Essex was too damned clever. How much did he know, or, knowing nothing, suspect? And if he suspected, could she tell him the truth? If only there were some one to whom she could tell the truth. Macpherson knew, but he was getting old and deaf. Talking to Macpherson now, she had to shout so, the effort was beyond her. Besides, it was embarrassing. She might well be overheard. As for Essex—no matter. She was tired, tired of pretense. Let him suspect. Let him even know.

"I do nothing," she replied bitterly, "I am the Virgin Queen."

His strong, tapering fingers closed over hers. "Your Majesty," he began in a voice that was husky with a strange emotion.

"Nossex!" Elizabeth withdrew her fingers

brusquely. It was a terrible moment. "You presume!" Dissimulation again. Archness. Elizabeth hated herself. A wave of self-loathing swept over her. Why could she not tell him? Why must she ever evade, dissemble? Why could she not say gently, quietly, "Look here, Robert—"? But that was impossible. What would he think? What would he say?

"I retire in abasement." Spoiled favorite, arrogant, capricious, Essex took himself over to the virginals where they were playing "Tiddley-aye-ay for One-eyed Raleigh," a song composed in the heat of a former carousal. Elizabeth hardly knew why she permitted Essex his high-handedness. Abasement, indeed! A subbasement was his desert, a dungeon. She would have his head for his presumption. No—no, she could never do that. His mind was too keen, too sympathetic, too near her own. Half the time he scarce knew his head from his presumption, anyway. It was all too confusing.

If only Essex could understand entirely, that might be the way out. But she could not tell him. Let him find out for himself and finding out, let him understand. But how? Even *his* mind would be sore pressed to adjust, to accept, to approve. With all its feminine tracery, Essex's was funda-

He scarce knew his head from his presumption

mentally a masculine mind. Basically, thought Essex, 'She was a woman, therefore to be wooed, she was a woman, therefore to be won.' She was a one, thought Elizabeth, sadly; alone, apart, azygous.

Yet there must be others like her in this way, hundreds of others, thousands. . . . She called for a map of the known world and spread the parchment before. England. . . . France. . . . Spain. . . . Italy. . . . Scotland. . . . Ireland. . . .

Ireland! The Sidhe—the Little Folk, the countless Little Folk! They were loved and respected by the Irish and not a little feared. Above all, they were understood. Always a nation to be reckoned with, Ireland was as nothing without them.

For once in her life Elizabeth made a decision, clear-cut, instantaneous, decisive. She would send Essex to Ireland.

BOOK 3

VII

Essex—her beloved Nossex—was in Ireland, but Elizabeth could well afford to wait. The pretense (always pretense) had been an army and the subjugation of the Irish, and Elizabeth was in no doubt

of the outcome. The Little Folk would see to that. She could think at last, brilliantly, soundly, resolutely. Again there were long days in the saddle with Macpherson, though he had grown so old he was inclined to stumble over his long, white beard and his carrots had to be parboiled.

"Ee do be's a wunnerful oold whacker, Miss Betsey, meanin' Oor Majesty." This was William, the head groom, older than Macpherson himself, but still able to hobble around. Then Elizabeth, in the sudden fullness of her heart must get down out of the saddle and thump William over the head with her riding crop to hide her tears. She was happy, happy. Essex would understand, at last, and then they would be together as they had never been, as she had never been with any one. What would it matter, this mating of birds and beasts? There would be the mating of his mind with hers, not quite the same thing, perhaps, but more than sufficient to cop—cop—what was the word—*cope* with the stress of a normal world. Her life took on new interest. She spent long hours at the virginals now, hardly feeling the twinge of annoyance which ordinarily beset her at the sound of the name.

Then came the news that her cousin, Mary, was brought to bed of a child. Her exaltation, her new

sense of freedom, her lightness and her happiness burst and fell at her feet in sorry shreds. Over her again swept the old, aching, terrible feeling of frustration.

Elizabeth dispatched a messenger to Ireland, commanding Essex's recall at once.

VIII

News of the return of Essex was difficult to obtain. Some said he had landed and some said he had not yet set forth. Word there was too that he lay ill of potheen in an Irish castle and could stir neither hand nor foot. Elizabeth restrained herself with difficulty. Commands and countercommands were issued. She must drag herself up to the very battlements of the palace and peer over the surrounding country to spy a trace of him. But it was as if the earth had swallowed him.

She fell, then, into a dull apathy, eating little and speaking less. Time hung suspended in a heavy, gray fog in which a steady pulse beat, beat, beat against her brain with a burning impact at each throb. She sat, her lean hips and broad shoulders swathed in an untidy dressing gown, staring with unseeing eyes at the fire or at the wall.

So it was that Essex found her. Delayed by head winds, sparing nor horse nor moment once disembarked, he must rush to the palace, past the guards and into her room with the old impetuosity. But he had no eyes for untidy dressing gown or uncoiffed hair. His eyes were upon hers.

"Gloriana!"—the word was more like a sob—"I understand, I know!" He was on his knees at the hem of her gown. "Oh, my sovereign, my poor, poor sovereign . . ."

With a strength that was not her own, Elizabeth must place hard hands upon his shoulders and raise him to his feet. His eyes, she thought—it will be in his eyes. Deep and long her eyes, those wells of loneliness, looked into his own and in their lambent depths she found the truth. He did know. He did understand.

"Nossex!"

Abruptly he turned, and rushed from the room.

"Nossex!" The cry was low, and deep and swelling. Her cup was far too full for further utterance.

IX

The Court was at Nonesuch, in Surrey. Dreary appositeness had prompted Elizabeth to take herself

Essex had been negotiating with James of Scotland!

thither with her retinue, for again she was in that gray fog. How right Poodle had been and how wrong was the world. What is customarily so, it will not have otherwise.

With haggard eye she stared at the documents on the table before her. Respectfully, at her elbow, Francis Bacon gnawed his thin lips. At her other elbow, Robert Cecil respectfully scratched the back of his leg.

"These are authentic—substantiated?" But she knew the answer. Wearily she made sign to her ministers to withdraw.

Ireland had worked too well upon Essex. Too well he understood. Here were incontestable proofs, in black ink upon unalterable vellum. Here —and God! the lonely bitterness of it—was treason.

Since his return from Killarney's lakes and fells, its pixies and its pookies, Essex had been negotiating with James of Scotland!

X

Elizabeth lay across the table with her head buried in her arm, her broad shoulders bent. This was the last. The world must go on, unseeing, uncomprehending. There was no hope, no release, no

salvation. She was alone, alone, alone. There was only Macpherson.

Blindly her hand reached out, groping, seeking a carrot. . . .

V

HIP! HIP! HORATIO!

Count Luckner Sea-Devils the Truth from Lord Nelson and Lady Hamilton

HIP! HIP! HORATIO!

So you want the low-down on those Lord Nelson-Lady Hamilton monkeyshines, eh, what? By Joe, rest yourself to windward on the mizzen croj'k futtock shroud while I light my pipe and cast off the yard-arm.

It's a serious business, and already there has been too much *wurst* about it, by Joe. A famous man and a beautiful woman make many enemies, and those enemies don't care what they say, the rascals. Nelson was a fine, seagoing old fellow, and Emma Hamilton, when everything is down in the log, was a great woman. That they meet and fall in love was fate. We sailormen believe in fate. We are fatalists, by Joe!

I remember, one time I am on the *Seeadler*, when *pfui!* down comes the dolphin-striker and knocks three beckets off the larboard binnacle. It misses Schmalz, the chief chanteyman, by half an inch. "By Joe, Schmalz," I say, "that was fate!" "Fate and begorra it was," says Schmalz. He was an Irishman. And he crawls

back in that chantey and stays there for the rest of the watch.

I skip over all the first part. That is history and never have I been any good at history, mathematics, dead languages or *eis* skating. I am a sailorman, by Joe, and I sail within three points of the wind.

It starts after Nelson has won the battle of the Nile in 1798 and comes back to Naples. He is a great hero and everybody is wild about the victory. Lady Hamilton, who is an emotional lady and very enthusiastic, comes aboard his ship, the *Vanguard*, and falls in his arms. "My Hero! My Hero!" she says. "By Joe, Emma," says her husband, Lord Hamilton, "give him a kiss." Lord Hamilton is just as crazy as all the rest for the hero, Nelson. Nothing, he thinks, is too good for that man. So she kisses him, and when a beautiful woman kisses you, by Joe, that is something! You don't jump overboard, by Joe! Nelson is only human and likes praise and recognition as well as the next man, maybe better. Then Lady Hamilton takes a look at him and says, "Gracious, Lord Nelson, what have you been doing to yourself? You have lost an eye and one of your arms is gone. By Joe, you are in a

"My Hero! My Hero!" she says. "By Joe, Emma," says her husband, Lord Hamilton, "give him a kiss"

hell of a fix! You better come ashore and let me nurse you back to health."

"Yes, yes, Emma," says Lord Hamilton, "that's the ticket. Take him home with us and fix him up O.K."

Nelson goes home with the Hamiltons and for three weeks Lady Hamilton nurses him with tender care. Lord Hamilton does everything in his power to make him comfortable and happy. "By Joe," thinks Nelson, "these Hamiltons are a fine couple! I will never forget their hospitality and kindness. Lady Hamilton is an angel. She is my guiding star, by Joe." Sailormen are very poetical. Sometimes I think they are really children, or just little boys grown up.

All this time, Lord Nelson has a wife, Lady Nelson. But she is in England so he don't see her much, not even with his good eye.

Well, after three weeks, Nelson is in pretty good shape again, so they begin celebrating at court. I forgot to say that Lord Hamilton has a fine job as British minister to the court and Lady Hamilton is the queen's best pal. There is much feasting and dancing and Nelson hears good of himself from all sides. Lady Hamilton says what she thinks right in front of everybody and Nelson comes back with

his personal feelings in the same way. By Joe! He is a sailorman and plain-spoken.

"Lord Nelson," says Lady Hamilton at a big dinner party, "I guess you are a big hero and pretty much of a fighting fool for your country."

"I don't know about that, Lady Hamilton," answers Lord Nelson, but his chest swells out and he pops a button off his vest. "England expects that every man will do his duty." Maybe he don't say that until later, at Trafalgar, but I'll bet he thinks it.

"Well," she says, "I like the cut of your jib, by Joe!"

"By Joe," he says, "how about your own jib? That was a pretty big thing you did getting me permission to land my fleet at Syracuse and take on fresh water. Men were dropping dead to the decks for want of it. I will never forget that—or you," he says.

"For the rest of my life, Horsey," says Lady Hamilton, "you will never be out of my thoughts."

Of course when you go on in such a fashion, tongues will begin to wag. But Lord Hamilton just smiles and says, "Nothing is too good for that man." Perhaps it is a little *dumm* for a husband of a beautiful wife, but he is a great admirer of Nelson.

After three weeks and three days of celebrating

and feasting, Nelson is good and tired and he itches to put back to sea. He is a sailorman, by Joe! *Lieb ihn und lass ihn* as we used to say back in Dresden. So he sails for Malta.

Meanwhile the girls, Maria Carolina, Queen of Naples, and Emma Hamilton, think it would be fun to have a war of their own. They talk the king into making war against the French and the king gets up an army of forty thousand and hires an Austrian *Schafskopf* general named Mack. Not Moran and Mack, you understand, but worse. Then they go to war. Pretty soon Nelson gets a letter from Lady Hamilton:

Dear Lord Nelson,

O sir the king is getting it socked to him good and plenty. Championnet and 18,000 French veterans are chasing those 40,000 barbers all over Italy. O Nelson, come home right away and do something or we shall all be murdered in our beds one of these fine nights! O I am very worried please come right away.

Ever your great admirer,

Emma Hamilton.

Nelson writes back:

Dearest-beloved Lady Hamilton,

On the fire, by Joe! I will be back next Tuesday so hold on until I get there. I told the king he could not

beat those French. You are ever in my mind and I pray God for your well-being. Give my regards to your husband.

Yours always,
"Horsey."

When Nelson gets back he advises the king to get out of Naples and let Championnet take the city. "I will sail you to Palermo and you can be king there," he says. "All right," says the king, "but first let me take all my money and jewels and court treasures and load them aboard your ships."

"Yes, Horsey," says Lady Hamilton, "let him do that if it is going to make him any happier."

By this time, Nelson would not say "no" to Lady Hamilton if she told him to go jump off the skys'l poop fiddle block. They have great times loading all the gold and jewels and court treasures on board the fleet and on December 23, 1798, off goes the royal court, Lord Hamilton and wife for Palermo, on board Nelson's ship, the *Vanguard*.

They arrive at Palermo the day after Christmas and set up the court. But Nelson has no pleasure in courts. All he wants is a quiet little walk now and then with Lady Hamilton free from attendants and courtiers and cheering crowds and, by Joe, by June he is fed up with this Italian court.

"Well," he says, "I see Championnet has taken Naples all right and it now goes by the name of the Parthenopean Republic. I will sail back over there and break it up."

"Oh, let me go with you, too," says Lady Hamilton and again he does not tell her "no." Well, to cut the yarn short, from June to August, 1799, she is on board the *Vanguard* with Nelson while he is winning back Naples for King Ferdinand. Hamilton is also on board but he is an old man and sleeps most of the time.

After Naples is recovered there is the regular celebration, and Nelson escapes to sea as quickly as he can, coming back every now and then to visit his dearest-beloved Emma as he calls her. She is always pretty good about letting him go away because it keeps appearances looking Platonic. I don't know anything about this Platonic stuff. I am a sailorman.

Finally, in 1800, Lord Hamilton is pensioned and recalled to England and at the same time Nelson has cleaned up everything in the Mediterranean with credit to himself and country. The high jinks in Italy are over.

Lady Hamilton is sad. Now she will have to go back to England and not cut the figure at the Italian

court to which she has been accustomed. Nelson sees she is sad and he wants to cheer her up. So he says, "I tell you what let's do. We will all go for a cruise on my ship—hip, hip, hurrah."

"Oh, Horsey, that would be nice," says Lady Hamilton and she gives him the eye. So they all go for a cruise to Syracuse and Malta, and as this is a pleasure trip, by Joe, now it happens! Something happens, by Joe; there is no other way of looking at it as you will see later. But Hamilton goes right on being friends with Nelson. That is about all that he can do, anyway.

When they get back to Palermo, Hamilton takes official leave of the king and queen and starts to go home. Nelson is also ready for home and here he makes a great mistake. This mistake spoils a little his fine example as an English gentleman and a model and inspiration to the British youth of the rising generation. This part they have to leave out of the child's histories of Nelson, by Joe! If he had had any regard for the child's histories of Nelson, he would have gone home by himself and settled down to a life of fame, getting decorated with medals and signing testimonials for Lucky Strikes. But he wants to go home with Lady Hamilton and he does. Tongues are now wagging like my old

Tongues were now wagging like my old Dachshund Piperle's tail

dachshund Piperle's tail and everybody says, "What a shame it is how he treats his wife, Lady Nelson, and carries on with that woman, Emma Hamilton." But they cannot shout down the fact that he is a great national hero. Right now, I say to myself, "Felix, you must not forget the fact that Nelson was a great national hero."

They leave Italy in a triumphal party and go to Trieste where there is more feasting and celebrating. From Trieste, they go to Vienna, Prague and Lowositz, and by October 2, 1800, they get to Dresden, my home town. I am not there at the time. Still they keep feasting and celebrating and the Electoress of Dresden, a fine lady, refuses to meet Lady Hamilton. "By Joe," says the Electoress, "I don't like that woman's reputation."

Nelson is very angry. "By Joe," he says, "if there is any insult intended, Lady Hamilton will knock down the Electoress with her own fair hands."

"Oh, sink the old barnacled hulk," says Lady Hamilton, or something of the sort and goes on feasting and carousing and making her famous attitudes with shawls. I forgot to say she is very famous for posing in living pictures with shawls and takes off the following classical subjects: Venus

Rising from the Sea, A Spartan Mother, Europa (without bull), Leda (without swan), Lady Godiva, "Now Ise Dranma," Dignity and Impudence, September Morn, The Horse Fair.

All this I get from *The Remains of Mrs. Richard Trent* and I say to myself, "Felix, that woman was probably an old pussycat, so take what she says with grains of salt."

From Dresden they go to Hamburg and sail for England on the mail packet, *King George.* They arrive at Yarmouth on November 6, 1800. Everybody is on the dock waving flags but Lady Nelson. She is not on the dock waving flags. "Well," says Nelson, "it is just too bad that my wife cannot take the trouble to come down to Yarmouth and meet me after I have been away all these years and am now a hero. But I will arrange so we all shall meet together in London."

He gives a dinner in London at the Hotel Nerot and Lady Nelson meets Lord and Lady Hamilton. Most of the time Nelson is talking about what a fine woman Lady Hamilton is and I guess you know as well as I do what a hit that makes with a wife, eh? She doesn't say much, but next week when they all go to the theater, Lady Nelson faints in the box from suppressed emotion.

She is very famous for posing in living pictures with shawls

Worse than that, Nelson spends Christmas in the country with the Hamiltons and leaves his wife in the apartment they have fixed up in Arlington Street. When he gets back, still all he can talk about is Lady Hamilton. In January, 1801, he starts talking about Lady Hamilton at breakfast.

"Herring, eh?" he says. "By Joe, Fanny," he says to Lady Nelson, "you should eat Bismarck herring like dear Emma Hamilton makes."

Lady Nelson jumps up from the table. "Dear Emma this, and dear Emma that," she says. "My word, you bally well give me a pain in the neck. I am going to get out of this."

"Don't slam the door, Lady Nelson," says Nelson, and he makes a long nose at her. Right there they separate. Nelson says, "By Joe, Lady Nelson is a fine woman, but she doesn't understand me. And she cannot insult dearest-beloved Emchen. I will make her a liberal allowance and let her shove off, by Joe!"

Next week he rejoins the fleet and at the end of the month, Lady Hamilton—I don't know just how to say it—well, she has a baby. It is a great secret. How they keep it a secret and how it was kept a secret all that time before—well, I will let you figure that out for yourself. I am a sailorman,

by Joe, and it is a delicate subject. To make it a greater secret, the baby is christened Horatia Nelson and they say it is the child of a Mr. and Mrs. Thompson. I say to myself, "Felix, none of that would fool a New York hotel detective, but those British are not what you call fast thinkers." Except, by Joe, when they surprise you, eh, what?

Now Nelson is with the fleet and again he comes back to visit Lady Hamilton. On shore he lives with the Hamiltons at 23, Piccadilly. "By Joe," says all of London, "that is a queer arrangement, my word!"

Nelson goes back to sea and writes to Lady Hamilton every day. He writes like this:

On Board "Victory."

DEAREST-BELOVED EMMA:

Here I am, thinking of you, by Joe! I have a hat on for it is very cold with a north-north-west wind and all my back teeth are aching. How is that delightful "Mrs. Thompson," eh? My poor friend "Mr. Thompson" sends her all his love and wishes he could be with her if only for a minute. I must go now and see if the chafing battens are properly rose-lashed to the fore t'gallant stuns'l topping-lifts as this is Tuesday. So no more now from your devoted and ever constant

"HORSEY."

Lady Hamilton—I don't know just how to say it.—
Well, she has a baby

By and by, Nelson tells Lady Hamilton to buy him a house in the country and fix it up and he will have her and her husband and Horatia down there to live with him. "Turn about," he says, "is playing fair, by Joe." She finds him a house at Merton, fixes it up and in October, 1801, he sees Merton for the first time.

"By Joe, dearest-beloved Emma," he says, "this is fine. This is just what I wanted." So he plays with the baby and grows roses and walks in the garden just as if he was never the hero of the Nile and Aboukir and took the 74-gun ship of the line, *Le Généreux*, Malta bound with six hundred soldiers. Lord Hamilton dies, worn out by his wife's feasting and dancing and carousing and striking attitudes. He dies with one arm about Emma and the other about "Horsey," game to the last. Now Nelson is very happy indeed and so is Emma Hamilton, by Joe!

Then Nelson goes back to sea in May, 1803, having been with Lady Hamilton for one years, six months, three weeks and five days, the longest time he was ever to be with her without being interrupted. Back he goes to sea, and, by Joe, the ocean is the best sweetheart of all. That's what we sailormen think, but don't tell my Countess I say so!

In August, 1805, he gets back to Merton and maybe he is not glad to do so. "Home again," he says to Lady Hamilton, "and this time for good. By Joe, I swallow the anchor!"

"Fine," says Lady Hamilton. "I will have the cook make some *kartoffelklöse* to go with it."

At last Nelson is very happy and ready to retire to a quiet old age with the woman he loves and their baby. He builds a duck pond and swimming pool. Now he has everything and life is full of contentment and peace. At last the harbor is reached and the storm is over.

Three weeks and three days later, he receives word that the allied fleet is assembling against England and his country needs him. It takes all his great bravery to show the letter to Lady Hamilton.

"Why should I go?" he says. "I am an old man. Here is everything I love. I want no more of fame and glory. I have enough. Let some one else command the fleet. I will stay here at Merton with you and Horatia and the roses. By Joe, those roses need spraying this minute."

"No, Horsey," says Lady Hamilton, "you must go. Your country needs you. You must go even though it breaks my heart. I will wait for you and water those roses with my tears."

Nelson kisses Lady Hamilton and Horatia, puts a rose in his buttonhole and goes. He goes on board the *Victory* and joins the fleet. On October 21, 1805, is the Battle of Trafalgar in which he is killed. About that, of course, you have read. Nelson dies, leaving Lady Hamilton and Horatia as a legacy to the English nation. It is a beautiful and touching testament, by Joe!

When Lady Hamilton recovers from her grief, she runs through the money that is left to her by Lord Nelson and Lord Hamilton and spends her last days in moderate circumstances in Calais where she dies in 1815 aged fifty-four years. Horatia is sent to relatives.

To look back upon it, as I do now, who can blame them for this love of theirs? They were direct and sincere and unashamed, those two. They loved each other but they loved England. Lady Hamilton cared too much for the eating and the drinking perhaps, and what of it? Pounded by the waves, buffeted by the winds they sailed their love-barque into the hurricane of life with never a shortened sail or a sea-anchor. They were sailormen, by Joe!

And, by Joe, that's all I know about your Lord Nelson and Lady Hamilton!

VI

A FAREWELL TO JOSEPHINE'S ARMS

The Hemingway of All Flesh

A FAREWELL TO JOSEPHINE'S ARMS

I

I was born in Martinique in 1763. Martinque is all sea and sky and palm trees and flowers like Coral Gables only there are no real estate agents just natives and flowers and palm trees and sea and sky and that is Martinque. Tante Renaudin was the mistress of old man Beauharnais. When I was sixteen I married his son, Alexandre, because Tante Renaudin was the mistress of old man Beauharnais. Hortense arrived in 1780 and Eugène in 1783. Alexandre said I was carrying on with a man back in Martinque and we had a scene and I went back to Martinque. After a while Alex said he was sorry and to come back to Paris so I went back to Paris. We were thrown into jail because there was a revolution. It didn't matter which side you were on, sooner or later you got thrown into jail. After a while Alex was guillotined. I was supposed to be but I wasn't but it was a narrow squeak. There

was a man in jail called De Hoche and that might have had something to do with it. Then Robespierre got his and the Revolution became a lot safer. I got out of jail and lived around. It wasn't bad.

The hell with all that.

II

It must have been at Thérèse Tallien's that I saw Napoleon for the first time. He came up to me and said, "Hello, Mme. de Beauharnais."

"Hello, Puss-in-boots," I said. He looked like one. Everybody laughed.

"Have a *fine*," he said.

"Have one yourself," I said.

"I'll have a *Joséphine*," Napoleon said. That was one for him.

"It's the first time I heard about it," I said. "Aren't you the fellow that shot up the rabble on the 13 Vendémiaire, Quatre-vingt-quatorze?"

"That's me," he said, "a big croak and shoot man from Corsica. I have set my seal upon France."

"Ah," I said, "he trains seals." Everybody laughed. This was getting good.

"Don't mind her," said Mme. de Staël, "she's like that. She's a Southerner."

"Go ahead and kid me," Napoleon said, "but I am slated for Big Things."

"Is that the way to talk to a widow?" I said. They had to take Barras out and pour cold water on him.

After a while the Man of Destiny went. I thought he was terrible.

III

The next time I saw Napoleon he looked better. He had had his pants pressed.

"Well," he said, "how about it?"

"How about what?" I said.

"You know," he said.

"Do I?"

"You certainly do. Hoche . . . Barras . . ."

"You give me a pain in the nose," I said. "Can't a girl lead her own life?"

"Honestly, Josephine," he said, "I'm crazy about you." It sounded funny to be called Josephine. My name was Marie Rose Joséphine Tascher de la Pagerie. I married Alexandre, Vicomte de Beauharnais, but he was guillotined in the Revolution.

"I'm old enough to be your aunt," I said.

"You're not fat enough."

"What about Eugène and Hortense?"

"I'm crazy about them too. I'm crazy about your whole family except Fortuné, that frowsy, flea-bitten mutt."

"He's not a frowsy, flea-bitten mutt."

"All right, he's a woolly lamb. The main idea is, will you?"

"Oh, I don't know."

"Listen, you've got to. It's part of the plot."

"What plot? I wish you wouldn't be so mysterious."

"You'll see. I just happen to be the best God-damned general in the world, that's all."

"You're a God-damned general nuisance."

"Very well. But will you, for the love of Heaven, for *la belle France*, marry me?"

What was I to do? I was a young widow with two growing children.

"All right," I said. "Put out the light and go to sleep. I'll think about it."

IV

We were married by a magistrate at the Hotel de Ville. I said I was thirty-two. Napoleon said he was twenty-six and a half. He didn't look it. I

We went upstairs and I sat on the bed. Napoleon started to take off my stockings

knew he got his uniforms in the youths' department of Brooks.

"How do you feel?" he said.

"I feel fine," I said. "I want a drink."

"I'll get some champagne." We went to a café and Napoleon got some champagne. It tasted swell.

"This champagne tastes swell," I said.

"Nothing is too good for my wife," he said. "We're man and wife, you know."

"Three lousy cheers," I said.

"Say," he said, "did I see you give the clerk at the marriage bureau the eye?" The wine was speaking.

"What if I did? I'm friendly by nature."

"Too damned friendly."

"It's my Southern training," I said. "Wheah ah come from, we-all believe in th' oahdina'y cou'tesies of life. We-all enjoy livin'."

"I know," said Napoleon. "Soft music of violins, young radiant creatures *en gala* in the formal waltz. Old family servants and a frosted punch bowl on the cool, dark veranda. Coon hunting and picnics under the spreading magnolias. Darkies strumming banjos by the cabin door. It must be nice."

"It's nice to look back on."

"I want some Napoleon brandy."

"We haven't any Napoleon brandy," said the waiter.

"That's right," said Napoleon, "you haven't. I forgot."

"Who the hell is Napoleon, anyway?" said the waiter.

"You'd be surprised," said Napoleon.

"You couldn't surprise me," said the waiter. "I lived through the Revolution."

"Yes," I said, "it wasn't a perfect Revolution by a long shot."

"Let's have another shot and beat it," said Napoleon. "This is our wedding night."

"Your wedding night?" said the waiter. "You poor saps!"

We hit him with a bottle.

V

Twelve days later Napoleon was for going to Nice with the army. I was just beginning to get used to him. He wanted me to go along and help tie a can to the Austrians.

"Listen," he said, "I'm going to tie a can to the Austrians. You come along."

"No," I said, "I won't. You go. And you can tie a can to yourself while you're at it."

"No," he said, "you come, too."

"What would I do in the army?" I said.

"I never thought of that. You would, wouldn't you?"

"I wouldn't either."

"The hell you wouldn't. You better stay here."

"I'll stay here," I said, "and hang out a service flag—service temporarily discontinued."

"You're wonderful," Napoleon said, "I hope you mean it."

"Of course I mean it," I said. He pinched my ear.

We went upstairs and packed his shirts with the low collars. Then we packed his boots with the high heels. I put a bottle of grappa in each boot. Then we packed his toothbrush, his razors and his extra hat. I put his toothbrush inside a bottle of Asta Spumante. I put a bottle of Cointreau in his hat. It just fitted.

As soon as Napoleon left I sent out for all the magazines.

VI

The campaign was a great success. Napoleon was a hound for battles. By the right flank! By the left flank! Smiling, the boy fell dead. He always won. He wrote every day telling me how much he loved me and how many of the enemy had been killed. I read some of the letters to Thérèse Tallien.

"Hey! Hey!" she said, "where does the man get those ideas? All he thinks about is Josephine and fighting."

"Well," I said, "thank God he can fight."

Napoleon kept writing and wanting me to join him. I didn't want to join him. I was having a grand time. We stayed up till all hours and went to bed when we felt like it. The trouble with Napoleon was he never knew how to relax. It got on your nerves. First it was "spectacular triumph —50,000 Austrians killed, wounded or taken prisoner. Why don't you join me?" Then it was "magnificent victory—192,000 of the enemy completely wiped out." That was his way of making boom-boom. It wasn't mine. I wrote and told him I would stay where I was, thank you just the same.

After that I forgot to answer his letters. It was a dirty trick but he got on my nerves.

Then peace was signed at Leoben. Napoleon wrote me to come down to Montebello. He was going to stay there for a while and rest.

That was different.

VII

Montebello was grand. It was on Lake Como and there was lots and lots to do. We did it. We were pretty drunk most of the time. Napoleon was waiting when I got down out of the coach.

"Well, Josie," he said, "here you are at last."

"Here I am," I said.

"You're going to like it," he said. "Our room looks right out over the lake. Would you like to see it?"

"I might as well," I said. "Where is it?"

"It's upstairs," he said. "Come on."

"I'm tired," I said.

"Not to-night, Josephine," he said, "you're not." That was the way he said it and to hell with the popular version.

We went upstairs and I sat on the bed. Napoleon started to take off my stockings. Fortuné didn't get

the idea. He ran in and bit Napoleon. Napoleon yelled. It was funny. I nearly died laughing.

The next morning we went for a walk so everybody could have a look at Napoleon and cheer him. They cheered all right. He was the savior of Italy. They cheered me, too. "*Viva la signora*," they yelled, and threw flowers. Some of them rushed up and kissed my hands. It was pretty hot. We were a big success.

"*Si je gagne des batailles c'est toi qui gagnes les cœurs*," Napoleon said.

"That's French, isn't it?" I said.

"What the hell do you think it is?"

"I think it's beautiful," I said.

"I think you're beautiful," Napoleon said. He pinched my ear. "Don't we have a grand time?"

"Cut it out," I said, "you forget you've made us a couple of public characters—you and your battles."

He was a fascinating little squirt. But he wasn't my type.

VIII

Montebello was all right as long as Napoleon felt like resting. The food was good and the wine was good and we had lots of parties. I went over big

at the parties and that pleased Napoleon who was beginning to fancy himself in the spotlight. I was used to spotlights but Napoleon wasn't and he kept me awake night after night telling me how grand he was and what a swell time he was having. Then he began getting out his maps and the pins with different colored heads and I knew what was coming.

"You're off for the front again," I said. "It won't be long now. Hurray for Nappy the Boy Scout!" I was a little sore.

"What's wrong with that?" he said. "I like fighting battles."

"Why shouldn't you like fighting battles?" I said. "You're the general. What can you lose?"

"I can't lose," he said. "Sometimes it scares me."

"It ought to. Killing people the way you do."

"It's business. Look at it that way, Josephine."

"I wouldn't look at it any way," I said. "I hate killing. You'll come to no good end. You mark my words."

"I wish you wouldn't talk like that." He shivered.

"Then why can't you stay at Montebello and have fun?"

"I can't," Napoleon said. "This is my destiny

and you are my star. You are the star that I saw in Corsica."

"So that's what was the matter with you in Corsica?"

"No," he said, "it was a goiter."

"That's why you can't relax," I said. "You goiter be doing something all the time." It was a lousy pun but I felt lousy.

"Listen," he said, "I wasn't going to tell you, but how would you like to be Empress?"

"So that's it," I said. "You're going to get yourself made Emperor."

"That's it," he said. "Don't let it get about, will you?"

"Empress Josephine," I said. "That sounds swell."

"But you ought to be a lot nicer to me, Jo," Napoleon said. "You treat that God-damned Fortuné better than you treat me."

"I do no such thing."

"Yes, you do. That's what they say."

"Who does?"

"Joseph, Lucien, Marie-Anne, Louis, Pauline, Jérôme, Caroline . . ."

"Oh, the brothers and sisters?" I said. "Your sweet family can go to hell."

Napoleon was a fine drummer and we could have put on a good act

"Don't talk like that about my family. I'll get sore."

"Get sore," I said. I was sore myself.

"And another thing," he said. "I want a son."

"Ha-ha," I said.

"Ha-ha yourself."

"Is that so?" I said. "Ha-ha Eugène and Hortense."

"They're damned nice kids," Napoleon said, "but they're not mine. I want a son of my own."

"All right, Napoleon," I said, "you perform a miracle and we'll have a son."

"That's right," he said, "don't let's fight."

"No," I said, "save your fighting for the army."

"And my lovin' for you," Napoleon said. "Boop-boop-a-doop!"

IX

The Egyptian campaign was yes and no. The French wanted Napoleon to go for the English so he used his own judgment and went to Egypt. He went to Egypt and I didn't go with him. He was very nice about it and thought I would be better off at home and would have more fun and God knows that was the truth. I didn't care a snap for his old

Egyptian campaign only he was growing difficult. I went in training at Plombières and had Hortense with me and we had fun. Hippolyte Charles was there. He ran in and out for meals and was around most of the time. Fortuné liked him and I liked him myself. You can't be a hypocrite about those things. But the brothers and sisters told Napoleon and when he got back from Egypt we had a terrible row.

"What's this about Hippolyte Charles?" he said.

"I don't know," I said. "Charles is just a good friend. Don't be a fool."

"I won't be a *chef de gare*, either," Napoleon said. "You ought to have more sense, Josephine. Just as I am about to become Emperor of France, you get yourself talked about. It's rotten publicity."

"The hell with publicity," I said, "can't I have any fun?"

"That's no way to have fun."

"What is—fighting battles? Bang! Bang! And two more schnitzel snatchers bit the dust!"

"I'm sorry you can't take a more serious interest in my work. And I'm sorry you had to get yourself involved with Charles."

"Involved your sister! The whole thing was perfectly innocent."

"That's your story."

"And you know what you can do with it."

After that Napoleon was angrier than ever and locked himself in the library. I sent Eugène and Hortense to plead with him. They wore him out eventually and he forgave me. He was sweet and begged my pardon and said it was just because he was crazy jealous about me, but I could feel he wasn't the same. The great passion was burning out. It was more convenient in a way but in another way it wasn't. He was getting unmanageable and some of the men from Fouché's office had reported that there were other women. What could I do? I could like it and become Empress, or lump it.

I had my children to think of. I became Empress.

X

The coronation was a long time and very tedious my coronation robe slipped down off my shoulders and I had a splitting headache but that was to be expected. The crowds, the bands, the ceremony, the cheering and firing of cannon and Napoleon bowing

right and left in back of his stomach. He was getting a stomach and that was typical of the whole thing it was all Napoleon now and I was just Josephine his consort and I knew we would never have a child. I suppose I should have been nicer to him when he had felt that way about me but I couldn't see that it would have made any difference. He was so stuck on himself that he took the crown away from the Pope and put it on his own head and there wasn't much you could do with a man like that. Everybody said he was the Man of the Hour; first he had been the cuckoo in the clock but now he was the whole works.

XI

Being Empress wasn't as much fun as I had thought. It was hard work. We had lots of parties but they were planned by the Counsel of Public Relations. Everybody knows that is no kind of a party, you have to be nice to the reporters and not consider your personal feelings, and I want to tell you that is no kind of a party. Sometimes we would sneak off to Malmaison and then we would have fun. I would get out my tenor banjo and Hortense would tap dance while Napoleon played the traps. Napoleon was a fine drummer and we could have

put on a good act only his mind kept wandering. Right in the middle of "Eagle of France, I Love You," or "The Creole Crawl" he would start making plans and plots for the conquest of some more of Europe. We didn't have a grand time like the old days. I was getting tired. The court life wasn't good. A lot of the new crowd were pretty crummy. I wanted to sit down and rest.

Napoleon went away on another campaign and I got some rest. But not much. First he would send word to go around and do things and then he would give orders to stop doing them because it wasn't dignified. He was moody and erratic and arbitrary. I knew what was in the back of his mind. He wanted an Eaglet. I didn't care. I was tired, anyway. Napoleon made me tired. The whole damned thing made me tired.

XII

Napoleon got back from his campaign and sent for me and I walked up the stairs and opened the door and there he was sitting at a desk.

"Hello, kid," I said, "what's the matter? You look terrible."

"I feel terrible," he said. "I don't know how you are going to take this."

"Well," I said, "spill it and you'll see how an Empress takes it."

"Look," Napoleon said, "I want you to understand that this has no reflection on you, personally."

"Oh, sure," I said.

"It's just a matter of business. Take it in that light."

"I'll take it. I take it like you took Austerlitz."

"Business is a big, impersonal thing, Josephine. When certain changes have to be made, well, they just have to be made. We can't always do what we like."

"What is it, Little Corporal," I said, "am I getting the air?"

"Well," he said, "yes. I'm afraid that's it."

"After all these years and the things you said in your letters."

"I know. But I'm Emperor of France, Josephine. I have to have a son. I have to have an Eaglet."

"Oh, sure," I said. "That's all right." I didn't want to feel badly but I knew I was going to.

"Listen, Jo," Napoleon said, "you can have Malmaison."

"House Specialty—Napoleons"

"That's all right," I said, "I like Malmaison."

"And all the allowance you want."

"That will be plenty."

"I'll bet it will," Napoleon said. "But I don't care. You've been a good scout, Old Girl."

"Oh, sure," I said, "but unproductive. I understand."

"It's business," he said. "You understand. You can write memoirs."

"I'll write memoirs," I said. "I'll grow roses. I'll have a zoo. I don't mind."

"Can I come to see you some time?" he said.

"Oh, sure," I said. "Any time. And I hope to Christ Fortuné bites you."

"Don't be bitter, Old Girl. It's just business."

"I know," I said. "It's life. Ex-Empress Josephine. Maybe I'll open a tea room. House specialty—Napoleons."

"Don't, kid. I don't like this a lot, myself."

"Who's the lucky girl?"

"Marie-Louise."

"The fat Austrian? I'm sorry for you. She giggles at the wrong moments."

"Don't mind me, Old Sweet. I'll get along."

"You're changing your luck," I said. Napoleon shivered.

"Don't say that," he said. "Don't say that, Josie. You wouldn't hold a bad thought against me?"

"Never in the world. But you want everything and no man can have that."

"I'll get it."

"You'll catch hell," I said. We were getting nowhere.

"I certainly hate doing this."

"Don't trouble yourself," I said. "As well she as I. So long."

"So long," Napoleon said. "I'll be seeing you."

"Sure. Come up and play the drums, some time."

"I'll do that," he said. "Here's your divorce." He handed me a sheepskin roll tied with ribbons and dangling seals. It looked terribly real.

"Hey, Puss-in-boots," I said, "I'm going to faint."

I fainted and M. de Bausset carried me out. When he got me outside I opened one eye.

"Don't squeeze me so tight," I said, "easy does it."

It was raining when I left the palace and the roads were muddy. The coach got all spattered.

After I arrived at Malmaison I sent a dispatch to Czar Alexander and another to Frederick William of Prussia. Then I went upstairs and told the maid *couvert* for one. She put an extra comforter on the bed.

VII

A KUBLA GREAT BOYS

Richard Halliburton Plays Polo

PROLOGUE

"Papa's home! Papa's home!" I cry, and rush madly into the solarium of our house in Venice. "And so is Uncle Maffeo!"

Songs of Araby and tales of far Cashmere. With popping eyes we listen to the saga of their wanderings. Beyond Soldaia to Sarai and Bolgara, across the Tigris and through the desert to Bokhara and on to Cambaluc, east of the Sun and west of the Moon. I burn with the fierce, white flame of aspiration. I, too, must see and hear and sense this magic. For me the camel caravan, the desert wells and tinkling temple chimes. They will be going back, Father and Uncle Maffeo. Christian envoys of a strange and mighty Mongol monarch, they have pledged return with Western ways to educate the East.

"Papa! Papa!" I cry, breathlessly, "kin I go, too? Kin I?"

"Marco," Papa replies reprovingly, "the word is

not 'kin,' but 'can'—as in 'kubla.'" He looks to Uncle Maffeo for his opinion.

"Why not?" says good old Uncle Maff. "Take him along, Nicolo—he's got to start some time. *Corpodibac*'—take him along!"

Marco Polo, trader, of the firm of Polo, Polo and Polo.

That night, the happiest urchin in all Venice, I slept with my old, tattered geography book under my pillow.

I. "NECKTIES! FRESH NECKTIES!"

Three days from the city of Chagannor, north by north-east is Xanadu, site of the palace built by Kubla Khan. The endless, vast, lofty rooms are gilt and painted with figures of men and beasts and birds and with a variety of trees and flowers.

Ever-changing vistas of incomparable splendor delight the eye at every point of vantage. Saddle horses are available with which to explore the many bridle paths of the fragrant pine woods, or for those who prefer the sparkling, crystalline waters of the lake, a variety of safe, speedy craft is offered. The near-by brooks abound with fish, and competent guides may be had at all hours. Instantaneous,

courteous and efficient room service from a pitcher of ice to the expert remodeling of an evening frock is yours for the mere clashing of palm against palm.

I was in Xanadu—not only in Xanadu, but in the Khan's palace!

Armed with the golden tablets, Father had brought me before the mighty Kubla. At the foot of his throne I stood trembling. He was swart and strong and stocky. His eyes held the look of eagles. His long, stringy mustache made me think of the licorice strings you got back home in the booths of the Venetian "cheap Giovannis" or "cheap Giacomos." Sometimes we called them "shoelaces."

"Kubla," said Father, "this is my son."

"Greetings, my lord," I replied, and flipping open my suitcase, I went straightway into my act. "How are you fixed for neckwear, friend? Here is a nice little number, wrinkle-proof, genuine plush brocade and guaranteed exclusive pattern worn by the Prince of Wales. How about a dozen? How about socks, shirts, suspenders . . . ?"

Kubla growled something in his own language and broke into a radiant smile. The interpreter rushed forward and relieved me of my suitcase.

"He says he likes you. He says you and he are

going to be great friends. He says he'll take anything you've got."

I staggered out into the open air and sat down on a convenient rock.

It was my first meeting with the indomitable Kubla Khan. One look at me—and he had bought out my entire stock of neckties!

II. MADE TO MEASURE

"These, Marco," said Kubla Khan, "are the measureless caverns. I decreed this place for my pleasure dome on that account. Gives people something to talk about."

I peered into the gloomy depths where far below ran Alph, the sacred river. A sullen spot and one to cast a pall over the brightest spirit. Funereal cypress fringed the edge and overhead a bird of prey winged noiselessly—a goshawk or a gerfalcon.

"I'll bet I can measure them."

"But I tell you, Marco, they are absolutely measureless to man."

"I'll measure them," I repeated. "I have an idea."

I went out and bought up all the available rope. I spliced the ends, making one continuous piece

which I marked off carefully into feet. Winding the rope on a light but sturdy bamboo reel, I was ready.

The next morning, Kubla and I gathered at the edge of the measureless caverns.

"You honestly intend to go through with this?" said Kubla.

"Of course," I told him with an assumed nonchalance, knotting one end of the rope firmly about a cypress tree.

"I don't think I ought to let you do it," said Kubla.

"Oh, don't be an old meany," I replied, attaching the bamboo reel to the seat of my pants. "You count three and we'll all know something we never knew before."

My idea was to jump from the edge of the caverns into the sacred Alph. As I jumped the rope would unwind from the reel on the seat of my pants and as I hit the water I would cut the rope with my legs, using a strong scissors stroke I learned swimming the Helles—swimming the Panam—swimming. Providing the rope didn't break somewhere else, which was a chance I had to take, the measurement at the cut would tell the tale.

"One—two—three!" said Kubla. ("Ook—mak—goom" in his tongue.)

I jumped.

After an eternity of rushing time, I hit the water with a resounding wallop and scissored the rope. The shock knocked my right eye into the left socket and my left eye into the right socket, which way they are this moment. Down, down, down into the sacred Alph I went, waving my hand to the mermaids as I went by. I hit the bottom and bounced back to the surface. Then I turned on my electric torch and swam over to the severed rope.

The measureless caverns measured exactly four thousand parasangs, eight hundred and sixty-two meters and nine feet!

III. THE TOP OF THE WORLD TO YOU

Helping Kubla Khan with the administration of his empire was all very well, but there was too much of a sameness about it. There were other places than Xanadu.

"I've had a dip in your sacred Alph," I said to Kubla one silken, star-shot evening as we sat under the pleasure dome over our melons, "and now I

I jumped

think I ought to swim the Sunless Sea. What do you think?"

"I think you could do it, Marco," Kubla answered, "so why bother? It's very cold."

"I've got to do something," I said. "Are there any mountains around here?"

"The best mountain we have is Mt. Everest, away off to the south-east. It's the highest mountain in the world. Nobody can climb it. Nobody will ever climb it."

That was enough for me. "Which way is south-east?" I asked.

Up and up and up and up and up and up and up and up and up and up and up! Those ups can give you but a vague impression of climbing Mt. Everest. Nor is the progress as unbroken. One step forward and three back, a sub-zero wind clawing, clutching and knifing you to loose your hold and whirl you frozen into oblivion. Ice—hard ice, rotten ice, slippery ice. Step—and slip, step again and fall, and stay where you are this time, gasping for breath.

Three months and a half ascending this beautiful, cursed mountain of 29,002 feet, and the end nowhere in view. Seventy-four times I have chipped

off the ice which covers my sturdy bearer, Foo Yong Dong, from head to foot. I myself have been a solid cake of ice for the last eight days. I am too tired to care. Up and up and up!

What bones, what hopes, what bitter failures of men lie under this fleecy, terrible, dazzling blanket, doomed by the virgin Queen Mother of the World to perish for the enormity of their daring, their insult to her inviolate dignity. Untamed, unconquered and alone, she will not yield. Must I, too. . . . The rarified air is making you foolish, Polo, on . . . and up. . . .

Five hundred yards from the top, I fall once more. I lie half-buried in the snow, my bursting lungs panting their last. I am dizzy. Yes, I am undeniably dizzy. Through the scudding snowflakes a dark figure looms, stumbling to my side. It is still my sturdy bearer, Foo Yong Dong. With my last remaining ounce of strength, I push him off the cliff and stagger on alone. Ten minutes later I am at the top. I have conquered Everest. I shout! I sing! I dance! I am the only white man to have climbed Mt. Everest! I am the only man of any color, of any pastel shade, ever to have climbed Mt. Everest! Ye gods! Am I man or god?

I have conquered Everest. I shout

Three days later I had to climb Everest all over again. Like a damned fool, I had gone and left my fountain pen on the summit.

IV. ½₂ DOZ. PRINCESSES, F.O.B.

On my return to Xanadu, I found Kubla Khan wearing a long face. It was his own face, but he was wearing it longer than nature had intended it. Arghun, Khan of Persia, had asked Kubla to replace a Mongol wife of his (Arghun's) who had died. Kubla took stock and found that Princess Kukachin would fill the order nicely, but there was some difficulty about the shipment. Outlying bandits and wild and hostile tribes put the overland route out of the question. The sole remaining way was to go around to Persia by sea, a long and perilous trip.

"I hate to suggest it," Kubla said, "but judging from past performances, it looks as if you are the only person for the job."

I told him I had no intention of escorting a seventeen-year-old Mongol bride-to-be about the world and asked him if he had ever heard of Lancelot and Guinivere, or Tristan and Isolde. He hadn't.

Even if he had, it would have made no difference. He took my departure as an inevitable calamity.

The feeling about the court was that my departure, one way or another, was in the stars. This way would probably be the most pleasant for me, all things considered. I took the hint.

At the conclusion of tremendous preparations, Kubla and I parted with mutual feelings of sincere regret, vowing eternal friendship and saying all the things the occasion demanded. I was loaded down with presents, instructions, assistants and authority. I felt like the head of a traveling circus.

Princess Kukachin I found to be an attractive young girl encompassing the salient points of beauty of her race. Torn between the sorrow of leaving the land of her birth and the curiosity of traveling abroad, flattered by the distinction of being the one chosen for Arghun's bride and terrified by the prospect, Kukachin could not be expected to be an intelligent companion. Surrounded by her female attendants, slaves, guards, eunuchs, pet dogs and other encumbrances necessary to a young lady of rank traveling on state business, Kukachin was sorely in need of one understanding, sympathetic, patient, comforting, calming friend.

This looked to be the most difficult and delicate exploit I was yet to undertake.

I had to deliver a Princess.

The bow of the ship rose and fell rhythmically with the waves, the wind sang in the rigging, the crew sang at the oars and under a silken awning aft, Kukachin sang native songs to her native *glunk*.

"Kukachin—little horsewoman," I said (for all her tribe are virtually born in the saddle), "how does it feel to be riding the great, great sea?"

"Swell." The boat rocked with approval.

"You are sad no longer?"

"How can I be—in such a night as this?" sighed Kukachin.

" 'In such a night as this,' " I said, falling under the magic of its spell, myself, " 'when the soft winds did kiss the trees and they did make no noise. . . .' "

" 'Beauteous night, O night of love—' "

" 'Sylvia's hair is like the night. . . .' "

" 'Star of me, star of me, watching the mother skies . . .' " she sang.

" 'Pale hands I loved beside the Shalimar, Where are you . . . ,' " I sang.

"Marco . . ."

"Yes, Kukachin?"

"I'm cold!"

Good Lord! The girl was taking me seriously!

"Put on your coat, Kukachin. And remember,

you are engaged to be married to Arghun, Lord of the Levant. You are almost there now, no more than eight months, four weeks and five or six days away."

"I know," said Kukachin. "But there is a proverb in my country which goes so: 'Does to-day's rice pudding dull the savor of next Tuesday's chocolate cake?'"

After that I kept the door of my cabin carefully locked.

V. THEY CALL ME FANTASTIC—KHÁYYÁM!

The green fringe of the lofty palms of Ormuz came out of the milky dawn. Maybe I wasn't glad to see them.

We were there.

Kukachin and I disembarked. A reception committee of Persian nobles stood waiting to receive us.

"Gentlemen," I said, taking the princess by the hand, "meet Princess Kukachin, sent by Kubla Khan to be the wife of your Lord, Arghun. We've been a long time, but here we are. If you'll just sign this receipt . . ."

A volley of laughter broke forth from the Persian gentlemen. They howled, clasping their sides.

Good Lord, the girl was taking me seriously

Tears streamed from their eyes. Some rolled on the planks of the pier in utter disregard of their jeweled finery.

It was one on me. Arghun, it seems, had been dead for the past two years!

When the excitement had subsided, I told them they could settle it among them. I had done Kubla's bidding. After a hurried consultation, they decided that Kukachin could marry Arghun's nephew Ghazan, a youth nearer her own age and obviously more fitting to be her husband. The princess looked at me, looked at Ghazan and agreed. I wished them all happiness, shook Kukachin's hand warmly and started back to the ship. And then a thought struck me.

"Wait!" I said. "This is Persia, isn't it?"

I was informed that it was Persia with some rude comment about who did I think I was—Columbus?

"No," I said, "I'm Kháyyám—Marco Polo Kháyyám. Get me a jug of wine, a loaf of bread, a book of verses—and thou (to the astonished Kukachin), come here!"

While the obliging reception committee gaped with open mouths, I sat Kukachin and myself down under a near-by palm. I uncorked the jug, opened

the book (it was a copy of Hafiz and I couldn't read the Persian characters), took a generous mouthful of bread and said to Kukachin—

"Now, sing!" (With the bread in my mouth it sounded more like "nnhhh, ffgghh!")

Kukachin promptly got up and went back to her newly found Ghazan. As the marriage procession moved off, she looked back over her shoulder and cried, witheringly, "You're full of red ants!"

A myriad of needle-pricks assailed my ankles. I bent over and examined them.

So I was!

VI. HOME, BOYS, HOME

There is nothing of further interest to relate until I reached Venice and my publish—er—my family safely, except that I stopped off at Bagdad long enough to invent the game of polo—for the *Persicos apparatus* to remember me by.

It happened like this:

Persia is a great melon country. There are more melons in Persia than there are Cohens in the telephone book. Everywhere and in great profusion are melons so sweet as to crystallize themselves under

the warm rays of the sun and others so tender as to jump off the stem and kiss the unwary and unsuspecting traveler.

The melons in the patch through which our horses walked sedately were still to ripen. Being green, they were round and hard as cannon-balls. My horse accidentally kicked one which broke from the stem and rolled on down the field. Idly, I took the butt end of my long, rattan spear (we were on our way to a marshmallow roast) and hit it a smart blow. To every one's delight, the melon rolled far and furiously. Like a flash, my spirited and intelligent Arab charger, who may have had a drop or two of Newfoundland blood for all I know, was after the melon. Again I hit it, and again. With whoops of joy, the Persians reversed their marshmallow spears and began knocking green, round melons all over the field. The game of polo was invented.

As I had to get back home, I left the game in its experimental stage, to be further regulated by the laws of the Medes and Persians. On my return, I attempted to introduce it in my native city of Venice but, owing to the topography of that city, the horses had to be discarded and the game modified into what is now well known as water-polo. Swim-

ming being, after all, my favorite exercise, it found instantaneous favor.

A brisk session of water-polo in the Grand Canal of a long summer evening almost reconciles me to my present life—remote, alas, from the romance and adventure and quaint hardship I experienced in the land of Kubla Khan, far, far away on the other side of the world. Almost, but not quite.

But then there is still my old, begrimed, passionately beloved geography book.

VIII

EX-CALIBER, OR A SQUARE PEG IN A ROUND TABLE

Dr. Collins Takes a Good Look at King Arthur

EX-CALIBER, OR A SQUARE PEG IN A ROUND TABLE

Had I not a proper and profound respect for my profession, I should hesitate to turn the clear and penetrating spot-light of modern psychology upon King Arthur and his knights of the Table Round. For this early English idol and his early English Y.M.C.A. of nobles stands revealed as one of the worst cases of psycho-pathological subverted schizophrenesis ever known. Setting aside Tennyson's idealistic presentation of Arthur as the autistic emanation of the poet-laureate's own ego, an ego hopelessly enmeshed in the red plush, pug dogs, black walnut and Teutonic tastelessness of his day, we cannot help but see the chinks in the idol, the pallor of the hero's true complexion and the maculate condition of the saint's robe. The Arthur of the earlier chronicles from which, oddly enough, Tennyson drew his inspiration and misapplied his talent, reveals a mother lode of psychopathological data which, however unintelligible to the layman, is to the initiate as plain as the nose on your Aunt

Fanny. Among other things, Arthur suffered from juvenile fixation, inverted superiority complex, aboulia, paranoic illusions of grandeur, deficiency of genesic endowment, moral instability, adult infantilism, hormonic sixths and congenital lumbago. These are not accusations, they are facts.

The issue of an unsublimated inclination of King Uther Pendragon for Igraine, the amoral wife of the Duke of Tintagil, Arthur was put at the head of England prematurely, brought into undue prominence and responsibility at the very time of the deeply disturbing impulses of pubescence when the stream of consciousness is swollen with the tributaries of nubility. What was the result upon this child of Uther's Igrained or *Ingrained* desire? Paralysis of the cortesian functions, no less, with a corresponding underdevelopment of sex-alertness. This latter may have also been a gift from the aged Uther to whose "Indian Summer" Arthur owed his being. Children born as the outcome of this last pyrotechnical display of nature have a tendency toward homunculism. And in my practice, I have encountered dozens of cases of frigidity, or frigidaire-mindedness directly traceable to the untimely death of the parent and the intempestivious assump-

His juvenile fixation is apparent

tion of adult burdens by the pubescent offspring. Occasionally there is a further complication of mother-worship, though this does not seem to be so in Arthur's case. It is sufficient for our purpose to say that snatched from the nursery betimes, the child Arthur becomes a king, but the king Arthur remains a child.

From the moment of Arthur's assumption of the throne with the attendant significant symbolism of drawing of sword from anvil and returning it "not once, but many times," his juvenile fixation is apparent. The traumatic record of his ensuing wars reads like nothing so much as the doings of the Little Scorpions' Club or some similar organization dear to juvenility. Arthur is a Saxon Skippy meeting at one time no less than eleven kings upon the field of battle, delivering and receiving severe wounds the nature and number of which only the fantastic realm of childhood imagery can devise. With all their slaughterings, slayings, shiverings, to-cleavings, to-brastings and hurtlings, Arthur and his knights would seem to be so many early English Jimmie Dugans, Sookies, Eaglebeak Spruders, Blabbermouths, Mickey McGuires, Skinny Shaners and Shrimp Flynns. And when things get too thick, there is always Merlin the "magician" with advice

and prophecy, Merlin who settles outcomes, Merlin of the paternalistic influence and authority.

"With that came Merlin on a great black horse and said unto Arthur, Thou hast never done, hast thou not done enough? Of three score thousand this day hast thou left alive but fifteen thousand, and it is time to say Ho!"

In other words, "All right, boys—stop that battling now; supper's ready. Come in and wash your hands." To Merlin's end trapped under a great stone by the autonomic Nimue, Arthur gives him the attention and consideration of an obedient child —direct manifestation of the father-worship of Arthur's juvenile fixation.

Only once does Arthur disobey Merlin and that to his ultimate dishonor and grief. Merlin, an adept at psychoanalysis far ahead of his day, tried to provide stability for the badly balanced, callow Arthur with a suitable marriage. Had he succeeded, history, doubtless would have to be rewritten. Approached on the subject of matrimony Arthur produces a whimsical and arbitrary attachment for Guinevere, but Merlin "warned the king covertly that Guinevere was not wholesome for him to take to wife." Not wholesome, indeed! Merlin seems to have know well that the full-blooded,

normal, adult Guinevere would soon find herself no fitting mate for the child-like king. If it was tact that made Merlin transfer the epithet from its just site, it was his understanding of Arthur's maladjustments that prompted his protest. And, as we are all aware, it falls out as Merlin foresees.

There is little indication in the *Morte D'Arthur* of Sir Thomas Malory of Arthur's having a normal sex life at any time. The affair with the Damosel Sanam to whom was afterwards born the knight Sir Borre may be set down to awakening curiosity followed by an incomprehending repugnance, shame, reluctance, modesty, puritanism or whatever one wishes to call it. More likely it may be set aside as an invention of the boyish Arthur who, tired for the moment of "playing general," turns to "playing house." His unfortunate affair with his half-sister Margawse, resulting in the knight Mordred and in Arthur's ultimate downfall, is more compatible with the psychic instability, over-suggestibility and amorality of his infantile character. The Freudian libido is present, but the Freudian censor is wanting. However adept Arthur was at separating heads and limbs from bodies in manifestation of potential sadism, he was never able to separate his conscious from his unconscious.

Other than these two instances, the one psychologically apocryphal, the other only too indicative and both tacitly ignored by the Victorian Tennyson, there is no further record of Arthur's genesic activities and certainly none to be had from Guinevere. Evidently she was a queen "in name only." It is his lack of initiative as well as his lack of heirs that most plangently invites attention to the limits of his physical equipment. His case, in analysis, closely parallels that of Karl Peter Ulrich Romanoff, the half-witted husband of Catherine the Great of Russia (see Hanemann: *The Facts of Life*, "Great Catherine's Great Idea"). Further indication, at least for the guru if not the chela, may be derived from the fierce enmity toward him of another half-sister, Morgan Le Fay by name, also a creature of maladjustment, hypersexed and with a morbid compulsion to sit upon pianos.

Guinevere's attitude toward her infantile lord and master may be best had from *The High History of the Holy Graal*, page 3 *et seq.* The queen is seated at a window:

"The King went to sit beside her, and looked at her in the face and saw that the tears were falling from her eyes, 'Lady,' saith the King, 'what aileth you, and wherefore do you weep?' 'Sir,' saith she,

'and I weep, good right have I; and you yourself have little right to make joy.' 'Certes, Lady, I do not.' 'Sir,' saith she, 'you are right. I have seen on this high day or on other days that were not less high than this, when you have had such throng of knights at your court that right much shame have I thereof, nor no more do no adventures befall therein.' "

Could anything be clearer or more pointed? In plain, and, it may be observed parenthetically, grammatical English, Guinevere, red-blooded, normal and in full possession of her faculties, deplores the absence of men about the court. The language, if archaic and unintelligible to the candidate, is more lucid than green turtle soup to the past master. Her choice of words is deliberate. She takes the King to task for the lack of adventures and the King agrees with her. "Rather," says the King, "is my desire changed into feebleness of heart." Arthur knows his weakness even if his knowledge of anatomy and the ductless glands is fragmentary.

" 'Sir,' said the Queen, 'and were you to go to the chapel of S. Augustine that is in the White Forest, that may not be found save by adventure only, methinketh that on your back-repair you would again have your desire of well doing.' " In speaking of

"back-repair" it would seem that the Queen has as little knowledge of anatomy as the King, or possibly she is kidding him.

At any rate, it suits the Queen to send the King forth with a single squire, "a youth tall and young and seemly and strong, that was hight Chaus, and he was the son of Ywain Le Aoutres." In the puerile manner of chivalry, before departure the squire chooses to remain on guard all night outside the bedroom of the King, but falls asleep. He dreams a long and involved dream the pathogenic elements of which are only too patent to an old hand (though probably over the heads of you swabs). The dream need scarcely be set down, the elementary symbolism of the passage which follows being even more significant.

" 'Ha,' saith the King, 'is it then a dream?' 'Yea, sir,' saith he, 'but a right foul dream it is for me, for right foully hath it come true!' He lifted his left arm. 'Sir,' saith he, 'look you there! Lo, here is the knife that was run into my side up to the haft!' After that he setteth his hand to his hose where the candlestick was. He draweth it forth and showeth it to the King. 'Sir,' saith he, 'for this candlestick that I present to you am I wounded to the death!' The King taketh the can-

dlestick and looketh thereat in wonderment for none so rich had he ever seen before. The King showeth it to the Queen."

Apparently the youthful Chaus is well aware of what goes on in the palace. It would seem that the Queen also shares Chaus' knowledge. He is rudely awakened from his alleged dream of a "dead knight" whose golden candlestick he is bearing away to Arthur when his imagery of a "man black and ill favored" who contests his right and who "smiteth the squire in the left side with the knife and thrusteth it into his body up to the haft" is suddenly merged with reality. The presentation of the facts is confusing in its pseudo-mysticism and fantasy, but not, as I may have mentioned previously, to the top sawyer or *chef de cuisine.*

Guinevere has speedily attended to the solution of her problem and if tradition connects her with Launcelot alone, it can be readily understood that there were many other men in her sex life before, if not during the reign of that knight in her heart. A pretty picture, this, from Bullfinch's *Age of Chivalry:*

"It befell in the month of May, Queen Guinevere called to her knights of the Table Round and gave them warning that early upon the morrow she

would ride a maying into the woods and fields beside Westminster 'and I warn you that there be none of you but that he be well horsed, and that you all be clothed in green either silk or cloth; and I shall bring with me ten ladies, and every knight shall have a lady behind him and every knight shall have a squire and two yeoman, and all well horsed.' So they made them ready, and these were the names of the knights: Sir Kay the Seneschal, Sir Agravaine, Sir Brandiles, Sir Sagramour le Desirus, Sir Doydynas le Sauvage, Sir Ozanna, Sir Ladynas, Sir Persant of Inde, Sir Ironside and Sir Pelleas; and these ten knights made them ready in the freshest manner to ride with the queen. . . ."

Further on the narrative continues "so when the Queen had mayed . . ." Palpably "was mayed" would be closer to reality. These ten knights of the Table Round, two with the portentous names of "le Desirus" and "le Sauvage" may well be, and I can see no gainsaying the statement, the original ten knights in a barroom.

Arthur, it seems, following the customary course of the genesically underemphasized, is either ignorant of, or indifferent to this state of affairs, long common court knowledge and gossip. Of his reception of Launcelot and subsequent attitude toward

Further on the narrative continues, "So when the Queen had mayed—"

him, the French of Delvan's *Collection des Romans de Chevalerie* leaves no charitable doubt—if you will bear with a translation which is my own. In "La Reine Genièvre," Arthur, trapped and prisoner in a castle, is rescued and restored by the extrovertive Launcelot, whereupon there is the customary feasting and rejoicing:

"At that moment the King spoke to send for the Queen, who came at once and a-running as joyous as was possible.

"At her entrance every one rose to greet her. But she, disregarding the others went straightway to Launcelot, threw her arms about his neck and kissed him with all the tenderness in the world.

"No one was astonied by this high mark of esteem and friendship which the beauteous Queen Guenever gave to Launcelot for each knew that it was to him that she owed the life of Arthur, her husband. But Launcelot, though passing glad of her signal favor, was no less troubled to receive it before so many indiscreet eyes.

"Then Guenever bespake him.

" 'Knight, scarce do I know what I may offer thee to thank thee of the favor thou hast done milord the King and me, and verily I do think there can be no reward equal to such valiant deed. Take,

and thou will, all that I can give thee in his name and in mine; let me give myself all to thee, my love and myself as befits true lady to true knight.

"'Gramercy, Lady!' replied Launcelot with mantling cheek.

"King Arthur who heard and saw this was well content, for he knew the Queen rewarded as was just the mighty prowess of the knight to whom he owed his life and kingly honor."

The next day Arthur actually makes Guinevere plead with Launcelot to come and live with them! (See Hanemann: *Facts of Life:* "Hip! Hip! Horatio!")

As long as Arthur is permitted his kingship, the professed fealty of his knights, his hunting with his brachets, his tournaments and his admission of new knights to the Round Table with suitable ceremony he is content, in his little-boy way. Playing knight is his obsession, and he fosters an absurd set of rules of chivalry which incite the footless and jejune daydreams called adventures. Frequently the adventures lose themselves in the magic and sorcery, the philters, enchanted rings, Excaliburs, giants, animals and damozels of an infantile fairyland. It is beautiful, I daresay, but it is not adult, and neither is Arthur.

From his unpleasant sister Morgan Le Fay he receives a shield on which is pictured a knight standing with one foot upon the head of a king and the other upon the head of a queen. He professes ignorance of the meaning, accepting it as some trivial manifestation of her ill-nature. For all of Arthur, sister Morgan is making a snoot at him and nothing more. Sticks and stones may arouse his assertive consciousness, but harsh words never penetrate his self-absorption—the self-absorption of an infant with sticky fingers and a feather.

Again, Morgan Le Fay sends Arthur a magic cloak the intent and purpose of which is, in everyday English, to "burn him up." Her symbolism and sarcasm in so doing are in words of one syllable. Considering the mistakes prevalent in copying manuscripts in the Middle Ages, there is every reason to believe that the many references to "gud king Arthur" originally and correctly read "dud king Arthur." Hark once more to Bullfinch.

"Then Arthur spoke: 'If I thought you would not disparage me,' said he, 'I would sleep while I wait for my repast; and you can entertain one another with relating tales.' "

The end, or *morte*, of Arthur coming with the revolt of Mordred is merely nature's method of rectifying her mistakes. Arthur destroys the monster Mordred, who in turn wounds Arthur fatally and certainly no one in his or her right mind can waste the moment to shed a tear over either one. Launcelot and Guinevere, long since tired of one another, emotionally worn out, exhausted and dissipated, turn to a monastery and a convent respectively and the story is done—on still another childish note, Launcelot must become a bishop and Guinevere an abbess. I'm an admiral, and you're a big bootlegger, and Johnny is President George Washington.

King Arthur Pendragon, stalked through the tall grass of his chroniclers, bards, poets, trouvères, recorders and historians who flourish as the green bay tree, is not any too wholesome a personage. Surely he was not a healthy one. Here was a man who had scarcely got to first base in life when he was sent down to second. Thrown for a loss on the third green, he fumbled the ball into the corner pocket when the whistle blew.

It is deplorable that contact with the story of Arthur is still encouraged among those of a tender and impressionable age where the same danger to

Had he given Guinevere a good clip alongside of the ear at the first rumble, the tempest might have passed to one side, unbroken

which the King succumbed is ever imminent. Yet ignorance persists and doubtless "Elaine the fair, Elaine the lovable, Elaine the lily maid of Astolat" will sing her way adown the endless stream of time. Underneath this sugar coating of poetry is the narcotic of romance, the unreal merging of the true with the imagined, effectuating fading actuality and blurring of outline. Mankind is only too prone to live in a dream world of his own making, "remolding it nearer to his heart's desire," while the world of actuality carries on about him, crowding him further and further into the crooked crevasse of his maladjustment when he can scramble out only with difficulty and heartbreak. The adult-infantile Arthur was an emotional romanticist and that was his downfall. Had he given Guinevere a good clip alongside of the ear at the first rumble, the tempest might have passed to one side, unbroken. But Arthur was ill-equipped, as I trust I have pointed out to you by now. He was unstable, maladjusted, obsessed, fixed, socially inert and practically impotent. How unwise it is to give over the exalted doings of so pathological a person to the budding young. I know of the case of an adolescent girl who, in the plastic period of her college days, devoted herself to the extensive study of Arthurian

chronicle and legend. When she should have been out meeting life face to face or neck to neck on the campus, she wrapped her nascent emotional soul in the cotton wool of the false idealism of romance. With what result? Later, in mature womanhood she was unable to overcome the desire to start up a tea room, calling it, of all asinine names, "The Table Round" and dubbing the waitresses Blanchmayns, Enid, Isoult, Vivien, Lynette, etc. In the rattling of the knives and forks she hears the clashing of the knight's armor; in the kitchen, Morgan Le Fay concocts her witch's broth and at any moment the front door may open to admit a Launcelot questing for a portion of griddle cakes and sausage. How much better off would she have been had she never culled the fine flower of chivalry and caught the hay fever of self-expression, the green-eyed go-ahead signal, the motivation of the inferiority complex? As the tea room is successful, thereby automatically removing the inferiority complex and replacing it with radiations of self-satisfaction, I cannot say.

But I can say and will say that the moral stability, the adjustment, the psychic receptivity, the involutional stages, physical and spiritual, the self-preservative urge and the rationalization of Arthur and

his knights is and are bad, both subjectively and objectively.

King Arthur fortunately is a legendary character after all. It would be more fortuitous were he not even that.

IX

VISH

Mary Roberts Rinehart Saves Queen Victoria's Crown Jewels

VISH

It all had its initial impulse in the copy of the *Pink 'Un* that our dear Alexandrina Victoria Wettin found in the red sitting room at Buckingham Palace. How it got there, I haven't the faintest idea. Vish, to my knowledge, has never subscribed to that crass publication at any time, before or since. Things, however, do get into the palace. There was, for instance, the snapping turtle that crawled out of Vish's work-basket, biting Aggie severely before it could be removed. I myself suspect the carelessness of Vish's man, John Brown, whom she has to bring up the coal, run errands and exercise her pug dog, Wellington. Brown is a Scotch Presbyterian, an excellent person in many ways, but he is inclined toward the strong waters of his country, which he insists are medicinal and prescribed for him by his doctor. There are those who hint that it was a deliberate plan by Mr. Disraeli. Goodness knows his fantastic behavior is capable of anything. I do not approve of him.

At any rate, when Vish, Aggie and I came upstairs after dinner, there was the *Pink 'Un* lying negligently on top of a presentation copy of the *Idylls of the King*, an autographed copy of *Jane Eyre* on *Wuthering Heights* and an advanced copy of Vish's own *Leaves—Second Series.*

"What is that disgusting thing?" said Vish, picking up the *Pink 'Un* on the spot. Her eye lighted upon a paragraph. Though not in juxtaposition to the telephone, she exclaimed "Hello!" and read to us the following item:

CROWN JEWELS IN DANGER

It is rumored on excellent authority that an attempt will be made by Russian agents to remove the crown jewels from the Tower of London. It is sincerely to be hoped that this dastardly plot will not succeed.

"Somebody ought to teach those Russians a lesson," remarked Aggie, looking up from a sock which she had been knitting. Aggie, it might interest you to know, is the Lady Agatha Pilkington-Pugh and Vish's favorite lady-in-waiting. I am the Baroness Lehzen, more usually called "Lizzie." The three of us are frequently a riot.

"At least the police should be notified," I said and started to ring for Brown.

"No," Vish declared emphatically. "It's a personal affair. I am Queen of Great Britain and Ireland and I shall attend to it myself. And you, Lizzie—and you, Aggie, shall help me."

Aggie and I looked at each other and groaned. There are times when it is utterly impossible to persuade Vish that she is Victoria and not Boadicea. From the expression on her face, one of the times was at hand.

"Come on," said Vish, her eyes gleaming with that purposeful expression we have learned to dread. "Get packed. We're moving."

"Where to?" asked Aggie, feebly.

"To the Tower of London, of course." Vish thumped the table with a regal gesture. "We're going to catch those Russians red-handed."

Aggie wailed, and I hardly blamed her. Red-handed Russians had a horrible sound.

II

The Tower of London may be excellent for instructive and educational purposes, there may be amusing parts such as the collection of instruments

of torture and the secret room in which the little princes were walled up alive, but as a place of residence it is not satisfactory. It is draughty and the plumbing is paleolithic. Aggie said it was not only draughty but dusty and absolutely no good for her hay fever. She promptly backed up her assertion by a violent fit of sneezing which finally was assuaged by a copious administration of blackberry cordial.

Vish's reply to the unfortunate Aggie was that if the Tower had been good enough for so-and-so and so-and-so and so-and-so (a long list of notables who had found themselves at one time or another in this historic pile) it was good enough for her.

"At least," said Vish, "*your* head's not coming off."

"Dod be so sure," replied Aggie. "If I keeb od sdeezing . . ." Vish sniffed and opened another bottle of blackberry cordial.

Vish then informed us that we were to make ourselves as comfortable as possible on spring cots in the jewel room. One of us was to be on guard all the time and when the moment was at hand for the attempt, the perpetrators could be easily overwhelmed with a selection of antique and historical

"Agatha Pilkington-Pugh, you ass, what are you doing in the Black Prince's armor?"

weapons with which the Tower is, if my opinion has any value, oversupplied.

"The plan is beautifully direct and simple, Vish," I said, "but what's to prevent us from being overwhelmed ourselves? We don't know how many of those awful Russians—"

"Don't be a fool, Lizzie Lehzen," said Vish. "You know as well as I do that there is a strict rule that not more than two persons are allowed at one time in the jewel room."

"Well, then," I countered, "do you know when these awful Russians are planning to make the attempt? I do think you ought to find out. We might be on guard for months and months."

"Mr. Disraeli said—" began Vish.

At that moment a heavy missile whizzed by our heads and buried itself in the wall. It was followed by another and a third carried away my second-best back switch. I dropped to the floor with an agility of which I scarce knew myself capable, closed my eyes and waited for the end. Doubtless the Russians having noticed the paragraph in the papers themselves, had decided to lose no time.

"Agatha Pilkington-Pugh, you imbecile," said the tart voice of Vish, "put that down instantly." It seems that as her chief weapon of defense Aggie

had picked out an old arbalest or cross-bow and had thought to improve the shining hour with a little target practice. Unfortunately, the cross-bow had a hair trigger and Aggie was still sporadically sneezing. The bolts had come unpleasantly near. Vish said Aggie was showing the proper stuff and sent her around the corner where she could practice until she had got the hang of it. We had had our baptism of fire, Vish said, which ought to steady us considerably and strengthen our spirits.

That was Vish's way of looking at it, but the degree of enthusiasm with which I accepted it was distinctly my own. If Aggie wanted to play William Tell with me she might at least have waited until I could get an apple out of the tea basket.

III

Mr. Disraeli arrived, Vish having sent for him, and she emerged from her conference with him elated.

"Mr. Disraeli says I have the sharpness of an eagle, the wisdom of the serpent, the boldness of a lion and—"

"The persistence of a cat in front of a fried-fish shop," concluded Aggie. "We all know Mr.

Disraeli's line. What does he think of your plan?"

"He approves of it tremendously. He says our catching the Russians ourselves will put me in great favor in the eyes of the people. And it won't do you two any harm, either."

"Did you find out when all this is to happen?" I asked.

"To-night. And I found out something else of tremendous importance. The chief Russian agent is to be disguised as Mr. Gladstone."

"What?" said Aggie, incredulously. "Who told you that?"

"Mr. Disraeli. He had it himself from his secret agents. He says that the chief Russian conspirator, believing himself secure in his disguise, will make the attempt by himself while, or whilst, two of his fellow conspirators wait for him downstairs at a side door. Mr. Disraeli suggests that we leave the side door open for the agent in order to facilitate his entrance and dull his perceptions with a false sense of security. When he arrives in the jewel room—whammo!" Vish concluded succinctly. It was scarcely a Victorian expression, but Vish was sincerely moved.

"Like a ton of bricks," said Aggie, brandishing the arbalest.

"Three against one," I agreed; "child's play for a trio like us. It's hardly fair."

"Lizzie! Aggie!" said Vish. "This is for England!"

After Mr. Disraeli left, we had a light tea and settled down to our vigil. The last gray light slowly waned and we sat there in comparative darkness. The gloom promptly brought Vish around to the subject of ghosts.

"I wouldn't be at all surprised if this place is haunted," she said. "And that reminds me—the side door hasn't been opened. Would you please run down and open it, Aggie?"

"M-me?" said Aggie. "In the p-pitch d-dark?"

"Certainly," said Vish. "Are you afraid? With a Pilkington-Pugh at Hastings and Flodden Field and Trafalgar and Quatre Bras?"

"And w-where are they now?" said Aggie. "W-westminster Abbey!" But she took a swallow of blackberry cordial and sallied forth.

Aggie had been gone a half an hour and Vish was beginning to become irritated over her absence when we heard distant sounds which came slowly nearer in irregular bursts.

"The Russian!" hissed Vish, seizing my wrist painfully. "Get ready, Lizzie!"

"If it's the Russian," I said, "he's not disguised as Mr. Gladstone but as an ash can." For the sounds were distinctly of the heavy and clanking sort that one hears too frequently in the early morning as the garbage men go about their work.

"Then it's ghosts!" said Vish, not to be outdone. "Awkward, at a time like this, but interesting."

The clanking grew louder and louder and through the gloom emerged a figure in armor which stumbled its way as if it had been grievously wounded in some shadowy battle. It made directly for us.

"Halt!" said Vish, and I honestly believe her eyes flashed fire in the dark. "Ghost, you are in the presence of Your Queen!"

Nothing from the ghost other than a slight giggle.

"Ghost!" thundered Vish, "did you hear what I said? I am your Queen! Kneel, miscreant! Probably an early Saxon," she added to me in loud whisper. "It's manners are distinctly lacking."

At that moment the ghost sneezed violently.

"Agatha Pilkington-Pugh, you ass! What are you doing in the Black Prince's armor?" Vish asked with annoyance and, I daresay, disappointment.

"I was cold," said Aggie, "and this armor, if

crowded, is warm. And it feels safe. I advise you both to try some yourselves."

Vish thought under the circumstances it might be a good idea. Theoretically opposed to violence, she now revised our plans to the extent of our all donning suits of armor. When the agent arrived we were to pretend that we were ghosts indignant at being disturbed in our last, long sleep. "Rather than belabor the poor man into insensibility," said Vish, "which plan, I confess, has not been of a pair with my conscience, in this way we shall probably frighten him out of his wits without injury, not only teaching him a lesson he richly deserves, but accomplishing our desired result. Lizzie—help me into that outfit of William Rufus."

As with everything else there is a certain knack to wearing armor. The unaccustomed weight, though evenly distributed, does not adapt itself readily to sudden movements from the center of gravity, but pulls a person completely off balance, in which event she is likely, as the children say, to faw down and go boom. We found this out almost immediately. Aggie, reaching over to pick up Vish's helmet where she had laid it on the floor, pitched forward, fell flat on her face and stayed there.

"Aggie!" said Vish, "get up at once! This is no

Vish, Aggie, and I lost our balance and came crashing down in a horrible clatter of metal

time for clowning. And in a woman of your age and social position . . . ! Get up instantly!"

"I can't," wailed Aggie. "I'm too heavy in all this junk. You'll have to help me up."

We tugged and tugged at Aggie, but for all our efforts she might have been a grand piano. But Vish is a woman of infinite resource. She went out in the hall and returned shortly with an armful of pikes, halberds, gisarmes and ceremonial partisans. Using these as crowbars, or peaveys, we started on our task of raising Aggie. First we rolled her over on her back. Then, by thrusting a pole-axe under her neck and using the shaft as a lever, we got her to a sitting position.

"This," said Vish, "is perfectly splendid. Hold still, Aggie. All we have to do now is raise you to your feet."

Aggie was able to move sufficiently to allow us to slide a quarterstaff under her. If she took one end of the staff, Vish said, and I took the other and we both heaved upwards we would raise Aggie without further trouble. Vish was quite right in effect, but just as we had Aggie a good twelve inches off the floor, the staff broke and Aggie sat down on the floor again, rather heavily.

In this manner we broke eight or ten valuable

and antique weapons of one sort or another before Vish thought of taking the rope that had hanged some noble whose name escapes me and throwing it over a projecting beam. By clinging to the rope and pulling, Aggie was finally able to get herself on her feet again. In fact, after Vish and I had encased ourselves in our armor, the rope proved invaluable, for we all of us fell down several times before we became accustomed to the weight of the metal.

Once we were a little more accustomed to the armor, Vish gave us our final instructions. When the Russian appeared, she said, we were to range ourselves side by side, raise ourselves on our tiptoes, raise our arms as high as possible over our heads with the hands bending sharply down in the manner of apparitions, and howl. After several rehearsals, Vish appeared satisfied and said we were really quite good, though she was somewhat worried that the scare might have a permament effect upon the poor man. Then we steeled ourselves to wait by leaning against the wall, that, on the whole, being the one position on which we could safely count.

We did not have long to wait. After ten minutes or so, we heard the sound of footsteps approaching

regularly and firmly. We settled our visors, ranged ourselves together and stood ready for the word "Britannia!" which Vish had arranged as the signal. The steps came nearer and nearer.

Preceded by a dim lantern, a figure walked into the jewel room and peered uncertainly about him.

"Now!" whispered Vish. "Britannia!"

We raised on tiptoe; we raised our arms and we howled. In our zeal for perfection, we must have bent slightly forward at the same time. For simultaneously, Vish, Aggie and I lost balance and came crashing down in a horrible clatter of metal on top of the poor burglar.

Beyond a startled gasp and an exclamation which I do not care to set down here, the burglar said nothing and made no move. Indeed, with Vish, Aggie and I and the armor on top of him, I don't see how he could have, had he wanted to.

It was Vish, as usual, who took the situation in hand. "This is most unexpected and undignified," she said. "We appear to have caught the wretch, but in so doing we have injured the poor fellow severely. Get up, Aggie, and turn on the light."

"I can't," said Aggie, "as you may have noticed before. And Vish has got her foot stuck through my visor."

"I can't get up either," I volunteered. "I'm balanced across Aggie's—er—I'm balanced across Aggie and I can't move one way or the other."

"I'm underneath both of you," said Vish, "and this man is under me. The situation appears to be complicated."

"There is just one way to fix this that I can see," I said angrily, "and that's with a wrecking crew and a tow-car. So you might as well send for them, Alexandrina Victoria Wettin."

"Don't be impatient, Lizzie," said Vish mildly; "remember your blood pressure."

The Russian agent who had come for the crown jewels said nothing.

After we had lain for some time in what appeared to be an inextricable mass of scrap iron, I discovered that the fall had knocked out most of the pins that secured my armor, our inexperience having caused their not being fixed any too firmly. By wriggling and twisting in a manner of which Mr. Houdini might have thought well, I managed to divest myself of my suit of mail and get on my feet, after which it was comparatively simple to light the lights and help Vish and Aggie. Our first concern was for the agent who, though without

serious contusions or lacerations, was still unconscious.

"This is our man, all right," said Vish, "disguised, as Mr. Disraeli said, as Mr. Gladstone. And a remarkably good disguise, I must say. The whiskers actually look real." She gave them a tug.

"Upon my word," said Vish, "I believe they *are* real!" With that the man opened his eyes, looked about him and remarked:

"Your Majesty's most humble servant, and would Your Majesty kindly inform me what, for —— sake, is the idea of all this?"

The voice had a familiar and unmistakable ring. Vish looked at me, I looked at Aggie and Aggie, after sneezing three or four times, looked at Vish.

The man was not a Russian agent disguised as Mr. Gladstone. He *was* Mr. Gladstone!

Vish gave Mr. Gladstone what was left of the blackberry cordial and explained the circumstances to him, hoping that he would take them as a true statesman and a sportsman. I regret to say he was inclined to take them as neither.

"Preposterous!" stormed Mr. Gladstone. "Crown jewels indeed! Whoever heard of such a ridiculous plot!"

"It was in the paper," said Vish.

"In the *Times?*" asked Mr. Gladstone.

"I did not see it in the *Times,*" evaded our dear Vish, who did not care to be drawn into an admission that she had any knowledge of the *Pink 'Un.*

"If it was not in the *Times,*" said Mr. Gladstone, "and it was not, such a ridiculous plot never existed other than as a figment of some one's malicious imagination." He refused to be drawn from his position and in the end, Vish, to whom the sturdy traditions of the British people are sacred and in whom, indeed, most of the traditions find their being, was inclined to agree with him. Accordingly, supporting Mr. Gladstone tenderly among us, we returned to Buckingham Palace.

IV

On our return to Buckingham Palace, Vish asked Mr. Gladstone what he had been doing in the Tower of London at that time of night, anyhow.

"Your Majesty's most humble servant," replied Mr. Gladstone. "I had called earlier at the palace to present the latest aspects of the Irish question to Your Majesty and was informed that Your Majesty had been pleased to take herself to the Tower of London. I repaired to the Tower forthwith, only

Our return to Buckingham Palace

to find my enterprise rewarded by the — —— reception ever accorded to a misguided man conscientiously active in the service of his — —— country!" I am sorry to have to record it, but I have been a veracious woman all my life and that is exactly how Mr. Gladstone expressed himself.

Vish must have felt that Mr. Gladstone had some provocation for his unseemly remarks for she said nothing other than, "Well, then, Mr. Gladstone, what about the Irish question?"

"With Your Majesty's consent," replied Mr. Gladstone sourly, taking his leave, "we will table the Irish question for the moment in favor of a serious discussion of the Tacna-Arnica situation."

Mr. Disraeli was a lot more cheerful about the matter, though Vish was inclined to take him to task for his gross misinformation about the alleged plot.

"Ma'am," said Mr. Disraeli, "if my secret agents were grievously in error, I shall see to it personally that I secure smoother and better secret agents. Though I cannot agree that lack of notice of a plot in the *Times* is proof conclusive that there is no plot. Consider Mr. Gladstone's influence with the *Times*."

"Mr. Disraeli," said Vish, "explain yourself. Why should Mr. Gladstone not want a notice of the

plot to appear in the *Times?* And now I think of it, why did you tell us that the Russian agent would appear in the disguise of Mr. Gladstone?"

"I wouldn't like to say, Ma'am," said Mr. Disraeli, laying a finger alongside of his peculiar nose.

Vish is an intelligent woman. It was a delicate moment. She did not see fit to press Mr. Disraeli further.

"At any rate," said Vish, drawing herself up with her most imperial mien, "we have saved the crown jewels for England!"

"Ma'am," replied Disraeli, "the crown jewels are over at Sir John Benn's where they have been this past fortnight, being polished. All in all, I am inclined to agree with Mr. Gladstone. If you will indulge me, Ma'am, the entire affair seems to have been decidedly *Vishy*." He laughed heartily.

"We are *not* amused," said Vish, giving Mr. Disraeli an awful look. Wellington, Vish's pet pug dog, jumped off her lap and went over and presented Mr. Disraeli with his hat, stick and gloves.

Dear Wellington never did like Mr. Disraeli.

X

OH, PTOLEMY PRETTY MAIDEN

Cleopatra Auletes and Peggy Joyce Are Sisters Under the Skin

OH, PTOLEMY PRETTY MAIDEN

I. QUEEN PATSY

Saturday. Well, Papa has kissed off and I am Queen of Egypt. Think of that, little Diary. It is wonderful to Hold the Destinay of a Great Nation in Your Two Hands but of course there has to be a Catch to it.

According to Papa's will that brat brother of mine Tolly is King.

That Brat don't know enough to wipe his nose let alone be a King of Egypt. I know other things about him too that I am not telling no not even to you, Diary old socks.

Pothinus says I am going to be the most beautiful woman in Egypt. He is very clever he is a Unique. I am not very interested in Uniques, but Pothinus ought to know as he is very wise and clever and Tolly's Tutor. But I say what good is a Unique even if he is clever.

Sunday. Papa makes an elegant mummy and very dignified. I took four or five gold rings out of the Sarcoffagas when nobody was looking as I don't think Papa will need them where he is going. Anyhow they would melt in no time at all.

We are haveing a Big Feast because Papa is No More. I gave a fish very full of bones to Tolly and dared him to swallow it in one gulp but Pothinus took it away from him. I am going to have Trouble with Pothinus. I don't think I can vamp him because he is a Unique.

Monday. I am haveing trouble with Pothinus already. He says I and Tolly are too young to rule so he will rule for us until we are of age. That is what he says.

I say what is the good of being a Queen if you are not going to Rule? I got so mad I hit Tolly with an allabaster vase and had some slaves beaten and then I felt better.

I hate Uniques.

If I could persuade Pothinus to go away for a long long time everything would be all right. But he is very clever and cooks all his own meals.

If he knows you are coming, he will bake you a cake.

Tuesday. I shouldn't have had those slaves beaten. There is a lot of unfavorable talk about it. The talk is fermented by Pothinus. Oh, what is a Young Girl to do? If they would only leave her alone and mind their own business.

Pothinus is a Big Pansy.

Though it is very wonderful to be Queen of Egypt I have my Worries. Now it seems that it says in Papa's will that I have to marry Tolly. It is an old Egyptian custom.

Did you ever hear of anything so ridikalous? I would not marry Tolly if he was the last Man in the World.

When I marry I will only give myself to Mr. Right Man.

Otherwise it would be immoral.

Wednesday. Oh, I have met the most wonderful boy with brown hair and a Roman nose. His name is Cnaeus Pompey, jr., and his father is Mr. Pompey and he is in the Roman Senate or something. Cnaeus has the loveliest arrangement with his bankers. All he has to do is sign his father's name to a check and the bank will honnor it. I think that is very Wonderful and Handy. I am not in Love with him yet but I like him very much.

Perhaps I should Love him and be an Influence in his Life. I was feeding the Sacred Storcks on the Terrace and he came up to me and said, Oh, Patsy, you are the most wonderful girl in the world and the most Beautiful. I will make out a check to you for any amount you say.

Well, in a case like that what else can you do? I laughed and said, Make out a check for 8,000,000 sesterces and he did and gave it to me and said, There, put that where it will do the most good. I was so happy I jumped right up and kissed him. Then he made out another and I kissed him again. Maybe I should not have done it but a girl ought to show some Gratitude for a Deed like that.

If this is not Love I guess it will do until Love comes along.

Besides if Cnaeus is going to go around signing checks like that somebody ought to look after him.

Some time later.

Tuesday. Oh, I am so wretched and Miserable. It is all over between I and Pompey. He came to me and said his Father was wild about the checks and has stopped his account at the banks.

I said, Does that mean that your signature will

not be honnered any longer? He said, Yes, but you still love me, don't you, Patsy?

I said, Do you mean to tell me that it will not be honnered for so much as a lousy obol? He said, That is just what it means my darling, beautiful Patsy.

Then I said, I love you very much, Cnaeus, but a Queen should never come between a Father and Son. Go back to your Father, you Prodigal Boy and I hope both you Cheap Skates get run over by a taxi.

Then I had him thrown out.

I will have to leave Alexandria myself. Pothinus the Unique has been stirring things up about me and people are talking worse than ever. People are so spitefull and jeallous of Others and if another's life is more Interesting than theirs they get Sore.

So it is best for me to go away.

Besides that brat Tolly has raised an army and Ussurped the Throne. I had rather take my own leave than be carried out on the end of a spear.

II. HAIL CÆSAR AND HOW!

In exile, Patsy learns more of men and physically the child be-

comes a woman—what a woman! Pompey is murdered and the arrival of Cæsar in Alexandria gives her the opportunity for which she has been waiting.

Monday. Well, this time that fat Unique and the Brat have certainly stuck their flat feet into it. They have murdered Cnaeuses father Mr. Pompey and Mr. Cæsar is furious. He is in Alexandria now seeing what is to be done about it and I am going to get to see Mr. Cæsar and tell him a few things for his own good. Just let me have ½ an hour with Mr. Cæsar and I guess those dirty Egyptians will find out who is their Queen.

Later. Mr. Cæsar is extremely difficult to see as the Brat has him surrounded with a body guard of secretaries and so forth. Then there is Mr. Cæsar's own Tenth Legion which is a fine body of men and very wonderful.

I shall have to think of another plan. There are so many of them and I haven't got all the time in the World.

Tuesday. A very clever boy friend of mine called Appolodorus the Brazilian has thought up a wonderful sceme to get me to Cæsar. Appolodorus

He took one look at me and said, "What and the hell is this ravishing vishion?"

is a rug merchant and very wealthy. I do not Love him, as a Queen has to draw the line somewhere, but I admire him and like him very much. He has scads of money and says I am the most beautiful woman in the world and it is a shame the way I have been treated.

Wednesday. I made an awful silly mistake yesterday. Appolodorus is not a Brazilian at all. He is a *Sicilian.* There are so many of those very wealthy dark handsome Brazilian boys about the mistake was natural.

Appolodorus has a stunning sceme. He says it will gool Cæsar for a row of pyramids.

He is very clever and has given me some really nice presents.

Thursday. I have met Cæsar and he is just about the nicest old man in the world except possibly Daddy Browning.

I must tell you how I met him.

The plan was to roll me up in a very valuable rug and bring the rug to Cæsar pretending it was a present. Then they would unroll the rug and there I would be, the most beautiful woman in the world everybody says so.

As it would be very hot in the rug, I did not put on much clothes. Just a little sheer silk Nile green chimise that I had been saving for an Event.

This was It.

Then I put on a lot of my pearls and rubies and sapphires and emeralds and diamonds. I thought the colored stones looked cheap and vulgar and just wanted to wear my diamonds. But Appolodorus said, No, the Romans like them that way.

Then he wrapped the rug around me and we sailed down the river. It was hot and stuffy in the rug even in my chimise.

Then I was carried in to Cæsar's presents and they unrolled the rug. When they unrolled the rug they jiggled me about and both shoulder straps broke on my chimise.

I stood up and I guess Cæsar got a pretty good idea of what I looked like.

He took one look at me and said, What and the hell is this ravishing vishion? Appolodorus said, It is Cleopatra in an old Egyptian costume. Cæsar said, O.K. Appolodorus, I'll be seeing you.

Then Cæsar took another look at me and said, *Veni, vidi, victus sum.*

That is Latin. Mr. Cæsar is a very educated man and speaks Latin like a native.

Later. Mr. Cæsar has promised to put me back upon the Throne of Egypt. I am delerious with joy.

I wish he wan't so old, though of course he is a very famous man and I love him and admire him very much for the things he has done.

Even if he has a bald head.

Months later.

Friday. I have been Mrs. Cæsar for some time, now. In the Eyes of the Gods, I mean. I am also Queen of Egypt again and the People can comb that one out of their whiskers. Julius is wonderful to me and has given me a lot of new diamonds.

I don't think a nice girl can have too many diamonds.

Pearls are nice, too. They are refined but valuable just the same.

Julius won't let me have Tolly killed. Sometimes we fight about it and he talks a lot about something called finesse.

I thought finesse was part of a poker game.

I think if a man really loves a girl he wouldn't want people about that annoyed her. When I tell that to Cæsar he just pinches my limb and says, Run along little girl and sell your papers.

I haven't any papers and if I had I wouldn't sell them. Unless, of course I got a good fat price for them.

Patsy continues to live as "Mrs. Cæsar" while Cæsar stabilizes the government. She presents him with a son and is persuaded to marry Ptolemy XV by the promise of a trip to Rome.

Saturday. Of all things! Cæsar wants me to marry the Brat like it says in Papa's will. I would not go near Tolly with a seventy foot pole, but Julius says it is only a political formality. All I have to do, he says, is sign on the dotted line and if I want to I can do it with my eyes closed.

Any time little Patsy signs anything with her eyes closed!

I consider it a wicked insult to Sonny Boy.

But Cæsar says it is just a formality and if I sign the marriage papers he will take me to Rome. As I shall love to go to Rome I will sign the papers, but I positively and absolutely will have nothing whatever to do with Tolly. It makes me ill just to look at him.

Cæsar is so unreasonable sometimes. And in the

mornings when he needs a shave I wonder why I ever let myself get done up in that rug.

What a mug to stamp on coins!

Months later, in Rome.

Saturday. Rome is certainly all right to visit but I don't see how the people that live here all the time can stand it. I would not take the place if you gave it to me.

Well, you know what I mean.

Julius and I have a big house with vast grounds in a fashionable street off the Forum which cost a considerable amount of money. I have an eight horse chariot to go about in and a smaller two horse one all done in gold which I can drive myself.

Life is just one vast round of endless pleasure with banquets, theaters and gladiatorial combats. Some of the gladiators are such handsome boys it is a shame they all get killed.

But then they always look at me just before they die and that helps.

The one bad part about Rome is the political intrigue. It is going on all the time and is not a bit amusing but very complicated. Everybody takes it quite seriously like the stock market.

Julius has been very nice and has given me lots

of really wonderful presents. But as usual people are jeallous and say things. They do not like me because I am a foreigner and a Queen and better looking than any one of them. They expect me to be like them.

As if one could.

They do not like having Cæsar bring me to Rome and some of the more exclusive families have said there ought to be a Law about it.

Can I help it if Cæsar has a fat old wife who is beyond suspicion and refuses to do the honorable thing by him and give him grounds for a divorce? Cæsar is madly in love with me and says he will see all Rome drown itself in the Tiber before he will give me up.

I would like to see all Rome drown itself in the Tiber, but I guess there isn't much chance.

Sunday. Too much political intrigue going on here. I have a feeling that something is going to happen. Marc Conn—I mean Marc Anthony—says I am the most beautiful woman in the world and he is crazy for me. He is a nice boy.

At least I think it was Marc Anthony.

Tuesday. Oh God God God. It has happened. I think I am going out of my mind. I am really

ill. Brutus and Cassius have stuck a knife into Cæsar and killed him. He is dead. Rome is in the greatest excitement as nobody knows who is going to take Cæsar's place. I don't even know myself.

I think I will go crazy alone and without friends in the great city of Rome where everybody hates me because I am an Egyptian. And I no longer have poor Cæsar to look after me.

Poor, dear Cæsar. He has left everything he had in the world to me. But I would gladly give it right back if I could only have Cæsar alive again.

I am so out of my mind I don't know what I am saying.

Now Cæsar is dead Rome holds nothing for me. I am going back to Alexandria with Sonny Boy.

Some months later, in Alexandria.

Sunday. Alexandria is just a big pain, it never seems to change. I think I will build a lot of temples and things and some new public buildings. I can tax the people for the money and we have more slaves for labor than we know what to do with.

The slave situation is terrible. The palace is overrun with them. Every time you kill one there seems to be three more to take their place.

Tolly my husband, and what a laugh that is, has grown up into a pasty faced libbertine with a passion for candied pineapple. He eats it all the time. I told him to look out, it would probably kill him yet. He told me to mind my own business.

He doesn't know what I know, the poor sap.

Tuesday. Tolly has killed himself from eating candy pineapple. I had a big dish I prepared for him myself and when he saw it he made a grab for it right away.

Look out, I said, that stuff will kill you.

Oh, is that so, he said, and crammed his jaws full. In about five minutes he fell down and wriggled around on the floor and died. After I warned him.

So it really isn't my fault.

People make their own happiness in this world.

There is some silly rule that there must be a King in Egypt as well as a Queen. So I will make Sonny Boy King.

He is just four years old and says the cutest things imaginable.

III. MARC! MARC! THE LARK!

Months go by with Patsy too busy with the ordinary amenities of life in Alexandria to attend to her diary. Phillipi finds Marc Anthony successful, and Miss Auletes considers him worth taking up.

Wednesday. It looks as if that nice boy Marc Anthony has won out in the East and will have charge of it. Marc has been pestering me to come and see him. He wants me to let him know if I will lend him my resources for further conquests in the East.

I am always interested in further conquests.

I don't think Marc will be very difficult. He is young and handsome and not bald headead like Cæsar.

That doesn't make me burst into tears.

Saturday. Everything is arranged. I am going to float down the Cydnus to Tarsus where Anthony is, in an open barge. Mr. Ben Ali Haggin has arranged a beautiful living picture and of course I am to be the star. I will be Aphroditte Rising from the

Fumes while the other girls will be grouped about me in artistic poses. As this is Classical, none of us are to wear much clothes and as I am Aphroditte I will wear the least. But Ben says to think of it as a very beautiful picture and High Class Art.

He says what does the Most Beautiful Woman in the World want with clothes, anyway.

Ben is an Idealist and doesn't mean what he says. Clothes are very wonderful and very necessary to make a woman look her best. Very few women look better out of their clothes than in them.

Some of the best dressed women are just frights in their birthday suits.

I must say it doesn't matter a bit whether I wear clothes or whether I don't. If I do, it's the clothes that get the break.

Tuesday. Well, the Tableau went over like a million sesterces. It was the Payoff and all the critics simply raved. They are sweet. If he can get the money from Mr. Belasco, Morrie Guest wants to put us on in the Palmer Stadium.

The minute it was over Ben rushed up to me and said, Patsy you have knocked them clean into the Med—the Meddit—well that's what he said. You could have anything you want right this minute,

Ben said. You could burn up the Universe. Next to you Helen of Troy looked like Mrs. Aloysius Mutt.

Ben is very sweet, though inaccurate. That was not Helen of Troy next to me. The girl next to me was that peroxide huzzy Lilian Kishmin the Jebusite and if Fanny Brice's nose doctor could make her look ½ as good as Mrs. Mutt he would be fameous.

Marc Anthony was the sweetest of all. He came up to me afterwards and gave me a big boquet of checks made up like Egyptian Beauty Roses and made out for 20,000 sesterces each. I guess there must have been four dozen of them.

Did you like the show, Marc? I asked him.

Patsy, he said, I was sitting in the sixth row and my eyes stuck out so far I saw the whole thing from row AA. Marc is very sweet. He is going back to Alexandria with me. He says can't Rome and Egypt be friends.

And how.

Wednesday. I really think that Marc Anthony is going to be the Big Love of my Life. He is so young and handsome with brown curly hair, even curlier than his secretary, Dellius who is *very curly.*

The war has improved Marc so much and made him *very determined.*

I think fighting brings out the best in one. I always make it a point to fight with my gentlemen friends. You can't be loving and kissing them all the time.

Norman—I mean Marc is a wonderful lover. I think I am going to be very happy at last.

I should say it is about time.

Friday. Marc and I have settled down like an old married couple. We are very happy. Marc is just gorgeous in many ways.

He has the strangest sense of humor if you can call it that. What he likes to do most is to go out to some night club and get ginned up and then go around ringing door bells and insulting policemen.

I don't think it is very dignified but Marc thinks it is very funny.

Last night we rang on somebody's doorbell and a man came out and shouted some terrible words at us. Marc had to explain some of them to me but after a while I caught on myself. They weren't really so terrible. Of course we were in disguise so the man did not know he was insulting the Queen of Egypt and the Roman Consul.

What he likes most to do is go around ringing door bells and insulting policemen

I wonder what he would have called us if he had knew.

It is really childish for Marc to go around like this and insisting that I go with him, but he is so fascinating I cannot resist him.

From the places he goes it is just as well that I am there to keep an eye on him. Men, men, men, what a bunch of tramps you all really are.

Wednesday. Marc has such a swelled head I have to keep teasing him all the time or he will get beyond endurance. This afternoon we went fishing. Marc thinks he is a great fisherman but I heard one guide say the only way that so and so could catch anything on his hook was to get hit on the nose with a brick.

Marc has divers who fasten the fish on his line and then he pulls them up out of the water. I call that Cheating.

I played a trick on him. I got tired of watching him fish so after a while I went away and hid. When he missed me he threw down his fishing pole and ran around like a crazy man saying, Patsy, Patsy, oh, where is that little witch. Oh, my God, I'll bet she has drowned herself.

So I waited until he was all hot and bothered and

worn out from looking for me and then I said, Here I am and very comfortable, too.

Where, where, said Marc. I have been looking all over for you.

Where I have been all the time, stupid, I said. Under a peer.

Marc was furious.

Friday. Marc isn't going to fish any more. Yesterday I gave a diver two sesterces to hook a salt mackaral onto his line and when he pulled it out of the water everybody gave him the grand ha-ha. It was very funny. I had to laugh myself.

Marc was wild. I said for goodness sakes can't you take a joke. A joke my eye, he said. A herring would have been a joke, but a mackaral is an insult.

That is a fine point of distinction.

Tuesday or no maybe it is Sunday. Marc can be very tiresome at times. Of course he is marvelous and very nice to have around the palace, but he is very ungentlemanly when he wants to be. That is because he is a Patrician and does not have to have manners like a head waiter.

Most head waiters are politer and more gentlemanly than gentlemen. They have better manners.

Head waiters have to be trained but a gentleman is to the manner born.

Birth is an accident and a girl cannot be too careful.

Anyhow, to-night I gave a big banquet and Marc was very much impressed.

Say, he said, this is a hot feed you are putting out, you beautiful little Trollope. He likes to talk toughie because he is in the Social Register and everybody knows he knows better and doesn't have to talk that way.

It ought to be, I said, It cost 4 million talents, 865 thousand sesterces and a cartful of obols.

Oh, my God, he said. Money, money, money. Is that all you think about? Is that all you care about? Do you value everything only by its cost? Can't you care for anything outside of money, money, money?

Well, that was a foolish speech because naturally I have a respect for money and think it is really very wonderful. If anybody doesn't think so, just let them be without it for a while and they will change their tune, I guess.

But I would not let Anthony get away with that one so I said I will show you how much I care for money and I took a big pearl earring I had on I

guess it was worth about 5,000,000 sesterces and put it in a drink of gin. When the gin had melted the pearl, I drank it. So that was that. Anthony simply passed out.

I guess when Anthony gets the bill for that pearl which hadn't been paid for he will not be so handy with his criticism.

Monday. Anthony is furious because I spent the Week End with Herod the King of the Jews. He said I had no right to go.

I told him if I was Queen of Egypt I had to attend to my duties once in a while and not be fooling about with him all the time. I told him I had to spend the Week End with Herod because I had to look into the Jewish Problem.

Is that so, Anthony said. Well, well, well. You had to look into the Jewish problem, did you? And what did you find the answer to be?

Nertz! I said.

That is an old Egyptian expression and very significent.

This goes on for some time and is more or less of a deadly bore. Like all lovers, Marc and Patsy have their quarrels and their recon-

ciliations. They campaign in the East and celebrate in Alexandria with imperial lavishness and waste. Then clouds form in the West.

Friday. Of all things I call this the hell of a note! Anthony says he has to go back to Rome and marry his partner's wife Octavia. He says he is heart broken but Affairs are Affairs. He says surely I understand.

Well as a business woman I understand, but I must say that after Anthony and I have been man and wife in the Eyes of the Gods all this time it comes as a bit of a shock. It would be even more of a shock only my information is that Anthony is kind of low in the bank roll.

So if he wants to marry Octavia because she is his partner's sister, I will not stand in the way. That is the way you are when you are a Queen.

Anyway, I am pretty tired of seeing the same map the first thing in the morning.

Anthony goes to Rome, marries Octavia and settles down and Cleopatra bravely attends to her knitting. She does not consider her knitting of sufficient moment to

enter in full. From time to time there is casual reference to Herod, Appolodorus the Brazilian, Herodotus, Apuletius, Xerxes Minor, Rameses Ur-Nish, the staff officers of the Fifteenth Messopatamian Light Horse and a man named McCarthy.

Then Anthony is sent East against the Parthians. . . .

Tuesday. Of all people Marc Anthony is at Antioch on business and wants to see me. He wrote he just couldn't wait to see me again and that Octavia was a big pain.

I ought to tear up his note and throw it in his face after the way he treated me but I guess I have a soft spot in my Heart for that boy. I don't know what to do.

They tell me that the Augustus National Bank of Rome is back of Anthony on this trip and have given him blank cards.

That means he can fill them in any way he likes and they will stand for it.

I guess I had better see Anthony.

Monday. I have met Marc and we have had a wonderful reconciliation. The poor boy has suffered

terribly being married to Octavia who is stupid and not nearly as wonderful as I am being of the refined passive type. She is an ash blonde and does not understand him nearly as well as I do.

I am sorry for ash blondes. They usually last about as long as one of those cards you get on your birthday. And are worth about as much.

I am going to help Marc gainst the Parthians which is what he is over here for. Then his partner, Mr. Octavius, can have nothing to say.

The Parthians are beaten and the couple return to the home grounds.

Wednesday. We have licked the Parthians and are back in Alexandria, celebrating. Anthony is simply wonderful and has given me a lot of the adjoining territory to add to Egypt as tributary nations. He has given me Chalcedon, Phoenicia, Coelo-Syria, a great part of Cilicia, Genesereth in Judea and Nebathal in Arabia. It is just like a wonderful dream.

I really love that boy and I will not let him get away a second time, you bet. Although he has to go back to Rome and turn in his expense account to Octavius I will not let him get out of my hands this time.

Marc calls the expense account a swindle sheet. Isn't that a scream?

Months later.

Saturday. Marc is still in Rome so I am busy building temples. I am building one at Denderah and another at Edfon and one at Coptos. A lovely architect has made plans for a wonderful monument at Thebes and wants me to put it up. I think that after I make a lot of changes in the plans I will do it. It will cost a lot of money but—

I write to Anthony every day and tell him that he really ought not to let that Mr. Octavius put it over on him. He is the senior partner and Marc is the jr. partner. But Marc is so much cleverer and abler it is a sin and a shame. I tell Marc that he ought to be the whole works and I have hired fortune tellers to go about Rome and say the same thing.

That is the least a girl can do for the man she truly loves.

IV. OCTAVIUS CRABS THE ACTIUM

A year later.

Sunday. Marc was on a trip with Octavia to the East so he sneaked over here for a visit. It cer-

tainly is good to see him after all this time. He says that seeing me after being with her is like coming out of the subway for a breath of fresh air. He cannot live without me and he is going to stay in Alexandria and to hell with that old Roman matron. He says my little finger unadorned has more sex appeal than four hours heavy work on Octavia in Rome's best beauty parlor. Well, I am sorry for Octavia but honestly can I help it?

Marc is a big, bad boy.

He is worried about Mr. Octavius, his partner who gets all the glory while Marc does the hard work. Marc is really the brains of the firm.

Along about half-past two of a windy morning.

Tuesday. What do you know? I am terribly excited. Octavius has declared war on me. I never expected anything like that and all I was trying to do was to get Marc a little justice. Octavius says he is sick and tired of my interference and I am a dangerous woman.

I do not think I am dangerous only a little playful.

Marc is furious. He says this is the last straw

that spilled the beans out of the apple cart. He is going to divorce Octavia and marry me.

Of course Marc and I will beat the pants off Octavius and then we will have Rome and the whole world pretty much our own way.

Patsy Auletes Anthony Empress of Rome.

Isn't that just too ducky!

Anthony is as good as his word. He divorces Octavia and makes an honest woman of Patsy. Then comes the war and the battle of Actium.

Saturday. Actium—on board H.M.S. *Hippopotamus.* Oh, oh, oh, this is terrible! Here we all are in the middle of the battle of Actium and Anthony is doing everything wrong. After he told me what a great admiral he was, too.

He may be hell in a vestibule but what good is that on a battleship?

You have to fight the enemey not neck them.

We are losing our shirts. This is the worst flop since Cassandra Cicero's *Nine-Fifteen Revue.*

I am going to scram out of here and take my ships with me. There is nothing I can do about it and there is no use getting Octavius sorer than he is.

As I understand it, one of the important points of military strategy is to get out while the getting is good. I am sorry for Marc but wouldn't you think he would have sense enough to take a few lessons before he tried being an admiral.

Tuesday. Oh, this is absolutely the limit. I am so unhappy I don't know what to do. I must have walked under a ladder or been crossed with a black cat.

Some idiot told Anthony I had killed myself and what does he do but get so excited that he falls on his sword. Romans are so impetuous.

So he is dead. My poor darling boy is dead and my eyes are red with weeping. I look like a Hag.

A very beautiful Hag.

I wouldn't give a second-hand diamond bracelet for my own chances.

I wonder if Octavius is nice? I don't imagine he is. But I must do the best I can.

War is war.

Friday. I have met Octavius and he is not nice at all. Of course I have been feeling terribly about poor Anthony and I looked a sight but wouldn't you think he would have made an effort to be more agreeable after all the trouble I have had.

It is only in trouble that you know who your friends really are.

Here is a little poem that I made up about it:

POEM

It is all very well to be happy
When life flows along like a song;
But the man worth while is the man who can smile
When everything goes dead wrong.

How true that is.

I went up to Octavius where he is staying in the palace and I said Well, Mr. Octavius, I guess you know who I am so I won't introduce myself. What are you going to do to me?

Octavius said, What does one usually do with a beautiful woman like you?

I said, Mr. Octavius, please! And my husband, Mr. Marc Anthony hardly cold in his sarcoffagas!

Octavius laughed and told me not to worry. Then he gave me a little gold snake pin all covered with diamonds and said it reminded him of me.

It was rather nice but it isn't much after what I am accustomed to. But after all Octavius is a conqueror and all that and the pin is as good as I could expect.

So, good-by, Little Diary. At least I have been Faithful to You

I do not think I am going to like Octavius at all. He has a fishy eye. Anything I do or say rolls off of him like water off a canvas duck's back.

Octavius reminds me of Pothinus.

Saturday. That stuffed shirt Octavius has given me the worst insult I have ever had in my life including those I got when I and poor Marc went around ringing door bells. I never thought anything like that could happen to me.

Of course I gave the gold and diamond snake pin to the palace jeweler for appraisal and when he brought back the report I was dumfoundered.

The palace jeweler says it is not gold but brass and the diamonds are just junk. The whole filthy thing came from Searus Roebuc and is worth about forty-nine cents.

I was so mad I had the palace jeweler killed.

So that's what Octavius thinks I am does he? I will show him what it means to insult the Queen of Egypt.

I have heard he intends to take me back to Rome and make me a hostess in a night club he is interested in. Over my dead corps he will.

I am mad enough to do anything.

Sunday. I guess I have done it, all right. I ripped that filthy snake pin off the front of my tunic and scratched myself rather seriously. The brass infected the scratch right away.

My royal blue blood wont stand the action of the brass and it has poisoned my system.

I am dying, Egypt, dying. What a lousy shame.

Anyway I won't have to go to Rome and be hostess in a night club and everybody will know that I died poisoned from a piece of brass junk that was given to me for jewelry by that cheap chiseler Octavius, boob Emperor of Rome. Me, Cleopatra Auletes, the most Wonderful and Beautiful woman in History.

So good-by, Little Diary. At least I have been Faithful to You.

What really slays me is who is going to get the royalties when you're in print.